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ABSTRACT

This yearbook contains papers which relate to issues in administering, supervising, researching, teaching, implementing, assessing, and strengthening programs and approaches in reading. The 22 papers and their authors are as follows: "Reading in Early America" (Ruskin Teeter); "Looking Back for the Future: Amish Literacy and Its Implications for Educators" (Andrea R. Fishman); "Culture, Family, and Literacy Instruction: A Response to Fishman" (Gary B. Moorman); "Culture, Family, and Literacy Instruction: A Response to Moorman" (Andrea R. Fishman); "Excellence: What Is It? Whose Job Is It?: International Reading Association/American Reading Forom (IRA/ARF) Cosponsored Session" (Patricia S. Koppman); "A Comparison of Student and Teacher Perceptions of Students at Risk" (Richard J. Telfer and others); "Preliminary Development of a Screening Instrument or Learning Disabilities in Secondary Language Class" (Thomas Cloer, Jr. and Louise Williams Stanford); "A Response to Jennings et al., and Cloer and Stanford" (Joan L. Williams); "Facilitating Change to Attain Educational Excellence" (John P. Helfeldt); "Evaluation of Literacy Training: As Viewed by Government Agencies, Educational Organizations, Business and Industry, and Literacy Providers" (James A. Dinnan and others); "Preschoolers Emerging Mental Models with Literacy" (Marino C. Alvarez); "Achieving Excellence in Reading: Where Do We Begin?" (Beth S. Wise and Judy C. Shaver); "Student Teachers' Perceptions of Basal Reader Materials and Methodology" (Leo M. Schell); "Using Mediated Instruction within Theme-Based Instructional Contexts to Enhance Reading Comprehension" (Alice Patterson and Victoria J. Risko); "Developmental Reading Classrooms as Practicum Sites for Prospective English Teachers" (Chester Laine and others); "Developing Case Studies to Prepare Reading Educators" (Roger G. Eldridge, Jr.); "An Analysis of Reading Textbooks Used at the College Level" (Sondra Rebottini and Patricia K. Smith); "Students' Perceptions of Early Field Experience in Reading" (Sarah Dowhower); "Reaction and Resolution: A Response to Dowhower" (Allen Berger); "On Seeking Certitude through Certification" (Wayne Otto and others); "History of the American Reading Forum" (Bob W. Jerrolds); and "A Commemorative Poem on ARF's First Decade" (Warren Askov and others). (SR)

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AMERICAN READING FORUM

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AMERICAN READING FORUM

1990, VOLUME X

Editors

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The Yearbook of the American Reading Forum contains selected papers and reactions to issues or papers presented at each year's annual meeting. The yearbook, a peer-reviewed publication, is indexed with major reference sources nationally. The yearbook is received by the membership of ARF as well as many major libraries in the United States.

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From The Editors

Volume X of the American Reading Forum Yearbook contains papers which have been recommended by the Editorial Advisory Board from those submitted by authors who presented at the 1990 Annual Conference in Sarasota, Florida. Papers from general meetings, problems courts, and forums have been arranged to represent the variety of exciting ideas explored during the conference.

The theme for this years volume is *Achieving Excellence in Reading*. There has been continuing discussion across the country of policies for improving schools. The contribution of research to educational practice is gaining increasing importance as educational decision makers consider alternative approaches to the educational opportunities they offer students of all levels. The reader will find in this volume papers that relate to issues in administering, supervising, researching, teaching, implementing, assessing, and strengthening programs and approaches in reading.

As the end of the twentieth century approaches, it is hoped the 1990 Volume of the American Reading Forum Yearbook will provide additional ideas, suggestions, and concerns that will help point the way to educational excellence.

The American Reading Forum expresses their respect and appreciation for the many years of service offered by the late Alton Raygor and A. N. Hutchinson.

American Reading Forum

Volume X, 1990

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Reading in Early America

Ruskin Teeter

"What more could be wish't
than to learn to read and spell."
Thought scratched on back of fifteenth-century
"Absey" book, British Museum.

Thank you, Dr. Ruth Kurth, for the generous introduction. And thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the privilege of coming before you this morning to open the 10th General Assembly of the American Reading Forum. I look forward to getting to know you during this meeting—and I should say that if it is true that all of you are as bright and witty and friendly and as much fun to be with as Dr. Ruth—and I've been assured that this is the case—then I know that I am in for a real treat. For we have not only many interesting sessions to look forward to but also the world-famous Florida sunshine and hospitality. When you combine this with the friendship and good will of colleagues and old friends from all over the country, then I think that we cannot help being very glad indeed that we are here today.

My subject this morning is "Reading and Learning in Early America." By "early," I mean our first 200 years, beginning with the 17th century and continuing on for the next 200 years or so. And by "reading," I mean also "learning," for during the period under discussion, the terms are very nearly inseparable. It is difficult to say where one begins and the other leaves off.

This is because fully half our young people—the female portion—were educated to the point of literacy; no further. That is, those who received any instruction at all were taught simply to read. A privileged few—perhaps two or three in a hundred—were then "finished" or polished up in what were called the "female graces," but for the most part, learning or education meant, for girls, learning to read. Nothing more.

The other half of our childhood population—the boys—were also educated to the point of literacy. That is, if educated at all, they were taught to read, nothing more. Fifteen or twenty per hundred may have gone further. But still the subject was reading, of the non-vernacular variety.

I sincerely hope that the period under discussion is of as much interest to you as it is to me. I think of it as one of the perennially most interesting of all historical epochs. For juxtaposed against the simplicity and harshness of life in this new world was perhaps the finest hour of the old.

The Italian' Renaissance was in full bloom. A confrontation of classical and Christian ideologies was beginning to produce an outpouring of artistic genius and unrivaled diversity and originality. This period saw the rediscovery of ancient literature and philosophy, a new growth of secular values and scientific investigation, and a new appreciation of civic virtue and political liberty.

Moreover, the people alive at the time knew they were opening a new phase in human history, one that would glorify man on earth. The world stood at the very beginnings of modernity—at a time that has left a deep and permanent impression upon the cultural life of the entire Western world. It was a time that produced four of the 10 most frequently assigned reading titles in today's American high school, as determined last June by the Center for the Learning & Teaching of Literature at State University of New York at Albany: Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, and Julius Caesar.

So it was an exciting time to be alive, and what follows is a reconstruction—a personal one to be sure—of a very small portion of the educational spirit or learning spirit of that time. To help you call up this period in your own mind, I have distributed some reproductions of woodcuts, copperplates and stone etchings which hark back to the very earliest days of reading and learning in America.

During most of the period under discussion, the school and the student were stepchildren in the structure of social life. A school was rarely a building constructed for the sole purpose of education, and it was usually furnished with minimal facilities for human occupancy, let alone learning.

The first schools were part of the cycle of sun and weather that governed the lives of those who settled the isolated rural areas of America. These one-room structures, usually painted white and resembling that other essential institution of society, the church, were populated by students only during the winter months. Schooling was a matter taken up only after the much more basic needs for sustaining life had been met. With the many chores children had to perform during the growing season, there simply wasn't enough time left over to give to books. But with the approach of the autumnal equinox (around September 23) and with the gathering of crops and storing away of winter hoards, the pace of farm life began to slacken. Now came the "off-season," along with increased social activities, fall festivals, shorter work days, and family holidays. And now, education, having taken its turn behind the very real business of living, could be dealt with and finally put to rights.

In the beginning, and particularly outside the towns, the few parents who were themselves literate enough to do so simply passed on whatever reading and writing skills they had to their children, in whatever ways they know. It can be imagined that their lessons were easily and quite naturally worked into the day-to-day routine of the winter season. On a rainy day, for example, a mother might take down from her living room wall some printed alphabet letters pasted on a piece of board and gather the smallest of her brood about her near the fire. Then, perhaps calling upon her own childhood, she invented games to the delight of her children, and thus sweetened the bitter pill of learning. Pointing to letters of the alphabet, coaxing, wheedling, romping and laughing, she would "wring out" from them the answers to her questions. Her rewards for learning were praise, kisses, and caresses, but also hot gingerbread, fruit pies and tarts, perhaps intuitively making for her children the connection between learning, or work, and life.

After supper and evening chores, a literate father might gather his children about the fireplace for family hour and conversation. And to impart his love for learning, he might help an older child read aloud from the family Bible the stories of David and Goliath, Samson and Delilah, Noah and the flood, Daniel and the lion's den and Jonah and the fish. Or wishing to dwell on the subject of human frailties, morals and virtues, he might help with the reading of stories from Aesop, of the turtle and the rabbit, the lion and the mouse, the lazy grasshopper, the fox and the grapes, and the goose that laid the golden egg.

But literacy was at a premium in early America, and few indeed were parents who could do much more than read a business sign or advertisement, or put to paper their own names, or fashion a crudely written message. Most parents, in fact, were but a generation or two removed from the dark, dirty and violent cities of 17th Century Europe. They or their fathers or grandfathers had lived a good part of their lives in tightly-knit, socially combustible neighborhoods, clumped together along narrow, smelly cobbled streets, which were breeding grounds for disease. They had lived desperately, often in irreducible and irreversible circumstances. Superstition, not learning, had been their world. They had wallowed in ignorance, mystification and bewilderment at the natural world. Theirs had been a world of bewitchment, charms, chants, magic stones, and mumbo-jumbo gibberish. It had taken almost all of their conniving just to keep the Devil and his fallen angels at bay. They had had little use for learning, and little in the way of background or tradition for learning.

Primarily for these reasons, schooling developed slowly in early America. Education surely was not uppermost in the minds of the earliest settlers. There was no school at Plymouth for more than 50 years, and there was no school at Jamestown for almost a hundred years. With today's emphasis on education, it is difficult to imagine just how minor and subordinate a role school actually played in the everyday lives of most of the early Americans. There were towns and ships to build, and families to feed and clothe. There seemed almost no practical use for learning. In fact, education *per se* was mistrusted by many of the boys growing up in the heady atmosphere of raw frontier towns. There were gambling dens, ale houses and brothels in Boston long before there was a system of permanent schoolhouses. Something about education seemed to these tusslers as unmanly, prideful, affected and snobbish. With construction and growth all about, study seemed to be a lost labor. For the most part, the youth of early America were "innocent of books," as the saying went before the harsher word "illiterate" came into vogue.

Schoolkeeping—and that was the word used; schools were kept—began in early America in the way of the early women's schools. Boys and girls attended these schools, usually at age 6 or 7, usually for one or two years at two or three months per year, and usually from 9 in the morning until 3 in the afternoon, six days a week. These women's schools actually provided more in the way of motherly care and keeping than in the study of reading and the rudiments of language. Very little time at all was given to any formal instruction, since the women were busy throughout the day with other duties. Women teachers mingled their teacher—nurse-mother duties, ingeniously keeping good order while mixing a little learning inside the house with a lot of play outside in large fenced yards. They did not often rely on the hickory stick for discipline, as did men teachers of the higher levels, relying instead upon their natural understanding of children. There were a few occasions when severe punishment might be meted out, but usually this was unnecessary, the teacher's quiet authority serving to quell the animal vigors and nervous temperaments of rowdy boys.

In the earliest years of settlement, very few children attended any of the women's schools at a given time. Few homes were larger than 14-by-16 feet, and then they were filled with the teacher's family and with space-consuming furniture. Probably five or six children per teacher was a maximum school size during the first hundred years of schooling in early America. As homes became larger and as other non-residential facilities became available, class size increased to 15 or 20 students per school. But most children attended no school at all, for the teaching of simple rudiments was considered a family, not a public, matter.

Students arrived at the women's schools shortly after morning chores had been done. After a devotional, they were put to their studies—memorizing the alphabet and drawing letters in sand (there was very little paper available in the early days). They pronounced words, read, and spelled. Often teachers made games of words; to spell "Massachusetts," for example, children would chant a ditty, "MA crooked letter, crooked letter A. . ." Perhaps the best learning took place—again, a personal reconstruction—on cold, rainy days, when teachers and children could not work outside. On such days, children worked contentedly before a cheerful fire laid in a deep, cave-like fireplace. As they worked along, each at a different task and pace, the teacher might brew a pot of spiced tea as a treat. Later she would warm the lunches the children had brought, or serve one of her own making—perhaps roasted sweet potatoes topped with melted butter and brown sugar. Then, after lunch, the children would play or rest and then return for an early afternoon reading session. For snacks the teacher might roast apples or nuts in the fireplace or bake gingerbread as a reward for the children's good work and behavior. Then, sometime after mid-afternoon, the children would leave for the day, in time to complete their chores at home before dark.

Those teachers in the women's schools who were married to ministers or to wealthy merchants usually possessed a better-than-average intellect and education, and, by virtue of their access to books and men of learning, were able to bring something of an informal curriculum to their students. At least they could reinforce much of the learning and erudition of the day. Learned men, for example, knew that the study of astronomy, which was then a mixture of astrology and the writing of Ptolemy, could go a long way toward helping people sidestep calamity, mishap and hard fate; and it is reasonable to expect that their wives passed on such attitudes to the children they taught. Comets dried up the earth's moisture, some of the women taught, and gave notice of impending droughts, hot winds, crop failures and fevers. It followed that if the stars foretold natural events, they also foretold the individual fates of men; and it was then but a step away to say that if God had left messages in the sky, he had left them on earth as well and that it behooved men to be on the lookout for God's signatures—his clues, signals, and broad hints as to how man's health and happiness could be maintained or improved.

The kidney bean's odd shape, for example, was a hint, a signal from God that it was intended as a curative for problems with that organ of the body. Snakefat was an antidote for poison, and powdered frog skins were obviously a remedy for skin eruptions, poxes, blemishes, etc. There were other aspects of the women's school informal curriculum as well. They warned and frightened their children and "stirred them up dreadfully," one observer wrote, "to seek God." Children were taught that they were not just born in sin, they were conceived in sin. In the eyes of God, a leading minister of the day told them, children were as "despicable as vipers, likewise beautiful when small." One of the community's primary expectations of teachers was that they help bring children to God at the earliest possible moment, so that if they died young they might still go to heaven. No child was ever too young to go to hell according to the theology of the day. The modern-day "now I lay me down to sleep" prayer harks back to that time when the doctrine of infant damnation was widely accepted.

The best known fixtures of these early schools were battledore books of "absey" books. These were really not books at all but single sheets of expensive paper on which were printed the alphabet, in large and small letters, and the 10 digits. Sometimes the Roman numerals, simple syllables, and the vowels were also given. This was the device teachers used to teach reading in early America before paper and books were plentiful. This sheet was mounted on a thin piece of paddle-shaped wood, about five inches long and two inches wide. To protect the paper, a frosty, transparent covering was applied. Since it was made of animal hooves, cow horns, fish scales, or snake or lizard skins, a substance called "horn," the books were sometimes called "hornbooks." But Shakespeare, and most teachers and children in England, where the books originated, called them "absey" books or alphabet boards. The usual procedure was for the teacher to take the "book" from the child's neck or waist, where it was appended for easy carrying, and to point out a letter or number to the child. The child then identified the character, and in doing so was sometimes rewarded with gingerbread cookies baked in the shape of the letters or numbers identified. Fewer than 200 of these alphabet boards are known to exist anywhere in the world now. They are priceless, and most are in private collections. I saw one in the British Museum several years ago—500 years old—on the back of which was carved this thought: "What more could be wished than to learn to read and spell." This is the title I will give to this paper when it appears later this year, in the proceedings of this meeting.

They began to disappear as paper and printing became more available in early America. With the first paper came the first basal reader, a far cry from the colorful, well-illustrated stories most of us learned to read by in the first grade. I would imagine that most of us remember very well some of those stories: a fishing trip with Dad with trout sizzling on an open campfire,; a milkman delivering milk in a far-off big city—innocent stories written with the idea in mind that if you could sell a child on a story, you could sell the child on reading itself.

Not so the first reader in early America. Just the opposite. It was not the book's purpose to celebrate life or amuse children. The tone was not optimistic but pessimistic. The theme was not life but death. The theme of young death ran constantly throughout its rhymed alphabet pages: "While youth do CHEER, death may be near" for the "C." "No YOUTH we see, from death is free" for the "Y." "As runs the HOURGLASS, our life doth pass" for the "H," and "XERXES did die, and so must I" for the "X." These are not very pleasant thoughts. Other verses instilling certain attitudes and values in children included "The idle fool is whip'd at school" and "My book and heart shall never part." Words such as "abomination," "Mortification," "purification," and "humiliation"—only a couple of which my computer knew as I check-spelled this paper last week—reiterated these lessons.

More than 20 million children learned to read from this little 80-page book during the 100 years it was on the best-seller list. Today, a facsimile of the book can be found in virtually every college library.

During the 1700s, the women's schools slowly evolved into publicly supporting reading and writing schools in towns and into "district" schools in the countryside. Now women began to leave their homes which could accommodate but a few children, and keep schools of primary grade in buildings set up especially for purposes of education. They never aimed beyond mere literacy and perhaps a little simple arithmetic, however.

They did do much to socialize children and teach them good manners, and their schools served as feeders to the few secondary schools that existed at the time. Children who showed a facility for language or who could memorize well were channeled by these women into secondary schools. But for 8 out of 10 youth, completion of the woman's school at age 7 or 8 meant the completion of their formal education. The most successful of them could read and write and do simple arithmetic.

It is easy to underestimate the significance of the old 'women's schools. Here was about the only place the child of average means could study his own language—the roots, syllables, vowel sounds and word structure of English. It is also easy to overlook these teachers' contributions to

American culture. With only a smattering of knowledge themselves, lacking facilities, books, paper, and pencils, and for the most miserly of wages, they brought together a few children from their neighborhoods and communities and taught them some simple ways of using words and numbers. What is more, they relied not on formal training but on their feminine aptitude for working with children. Their schools were generally happy places, the next best thing, the children said, to "going to grandma's house."

If I may say in closing, ladies and gentlemen, these are the traditions on which you, as reading specialists, build. It is a proud heritage you have. It seems to me that your work is of cosmic importance and that you can do no greater work than to build upon the labors of those nameless, forgotten women who, barely literate themselves, kept the flame of learning alive until the torch could be passed on to you. Thank you very much.

Looking Back for the Future: Amish Literacy and Its Implications for Educators

Andrea R. Fishman

Imagine yourself a fifth or sixth grader on your way to school. Not to a several-story brick school or a low-slung glassed-in school but to a white clapboard one-room school that sits atop a gentle hill, surrounded not by the macadam of parking lots or bus lots or even the concrete of neighborhood streets but by meadows, fields, trees and neighborhood farms as far as the eye can see. You arrive at school—on foot or scooter, or by buggy—and you play tag outside until 8:30, when one of your schoolmates pulls the thick, slightly frayed rope of the schoolhouse bell, telling you it's time to go in. After hanging your coat on a hook at the back of the schoolroom and depositing your lunch on a shelf nearby, you move quickly across the well-swept, well-worn wooden floor to your seat—an armless wooden swivel chair attached by its wrought-metal pedestal to a matching slant-top wooden desk.

Verna, your teacher, comes in and leads everyone in the singing of several hymns. Then you begin working diligently at the seatwork listed on the blackboard for the grade you're in. You've been working diligently at your seat for some time; now you are about to participate in a history lesson about Woodrow Wilson and his presidency. You've read the assigned chapter in your textbook—which has been adapted, edited, and published especially for Old Order schools like yours—but you neither know nor care about that fact.

When Verna calls for fifth-and sixth-grade history, you take your textbook and join your six classmates standing single file across the front of the classroom. Verna sits in the back of the room, her book open in her lap. While students in the other six grades busily—and quietly—attend to their own seatwork, you clutch your closed book in front of you and *wait for the lesson to start.*

Verna begins by saying, "Woodrow Wilson—who was he?" and the boy to your left answers, "President."

"Can anybody tell me anything about his childhood?" Verna continues. And when no one responds she asks, "What did his family call him?"

"Tommy," a girl replies.

"What happened to the name Tommy when he grew older?" Verna goes on.

"Stopped using it," someone else responds.

"What did he believe was the very best job?"

"Being president," you call out.

"When his dad teased him about being president, how did he act? What did he say?"

"That he would be president."

"What was his father?"

"A minister."

"Were there any more people in the family who were ministers?"

"Yes."

"Did Tommy want to be a minister like his father?"

"No."

"Who was his teacher when he was nearly nine?"

"His father."

"Would you like your dad for a teacher?"

"Yes."

"What did his father teach him was the most important thing in life?"

"Doing what you believe is right."

"If a man thinks what he's doing is right, should he do it no matter what others think?"

"Yes."

"Was his father a good public speaker?"

"Yes."

"What school did he go to after he was 17?"

"College."

"Did he love baseball?"

"Yes."

"Did he love school?"

"Yes."

"Was he ever a teacher?"

"Yes."

"Did the pupils think he was an interesting teacher?"

"Yes."

"Did he meet his girl in college?"

"Yes."

"Were they in a war when he was president?"

"Yes."

"What war happened when he was president?"

"World War I."

"In 1914 the war broke out where?"

"In Europe."

"Did Wilson love war?"

"No."

"Can you tell me anything about this ship? What kind of ship was the Lusitania? What country belonged to that ship?"

"Britain."

"How many people were drowned?"

"1,198."

"Did this make the United States angry?"

"Yes."

"Did they make war right then and there, or did he get them to agree not to do it again?"

"He got them to agree."

"Did the war start later on?"

"Yes."

"Was this World War II?"

"No."

"When did they stop fighting?"

"1918."

"Can you tell me anything about his death? Do you know when he died?"

"1924."

Verna closes her book, stands up, and begins moving toward her desk. That is your signal that the lesson is over and you may return to your seat as well.

It's been an excellent lesson. An impressive one. A lesson that has gone almost exactly as it should. The few times students could not respond to her questions, Verna rephrased so they could. Her questions reconstructed the textbook chapter; her students had read that chapter carefully enough to be able to answer correctly. Collaboratively, then, teacher and students conducted a history lesson virtually without missing a beat. They were all so well prepared and so well behaved. They learned their history lesson and they all actively participated in it. Madeline Hunter would have been proud.

Of course, Verna's lessons don't always run this smoothly, especially with lower-grade students But Verna knows how to take care of that, witness this second-grade health lesson about a chapter called "On the Farm," in which a child has an allergic reaction after eating too many strawberries. Again the questions are Verna's, but this time the answers are second graders'.

"Are strawberries good for you?" Verna begins.

"Yes," one student responds.

"What could happen if you ate nothing but strawberries?...Does anybody know?"

"You would get as red as a strawberry," a boy says.

"And would you itch too?" Verna asks without hesitation. "What do we call that?...Starts with an H."

"Hyperactive," comes the reply.

"You'd get hives," Verna asserts. "That's what we call it when you get all red and itchy. What else were they working, besides picking strawberries?...Were they working anything else, Wilma?"

"Yes."

"What were they working?...Were they spraying trees?"

"Yes."

"What do we spray trees for?...So the insects don't get at the fruit?...Yes, that's why we spray...Look at the picture. What are they doing?"

"Picking apples," someone answers.

Suddenly Glenn interjects, "That's not farm work, picking apples."

But Verna goes right on. "Look at the boy feeding cows in the picture. How many in second grade ever gave cows something to eat?"

All but one boy raises his hand.

"You may sit down, second grade," Verna says.

The format of this lesson was the same as the history one: students stood in front, Verna sat in back. Verna asked questions, students supplied answers. But these students could not always supply answers, and sometimes their answers were wrong as far as Verna was concerned. But Verna knew how to extinguish incorrect or inappropriate responses: she ignored them. And she knew that students would only learn correct answers if she supplied them, so when necessary, she did.

Verna might say about this lesson that her second graders don't read as well as her older pupils do, and I would agree. But I'd be meaning something very different by that assessment than she would. I would suggest that the difference for these second graders is not simply that they haven't learned to decode or to comprehend as well as their older schoolmates. Rather they have not yet figured out what counts as reading in school. They haven't learned what to attend to in a textbook and what to ignore; they haven't learned what counts as a valid response in a reading lesson and what does not. In other words, these second graders have not been scholastically socialized as well as their sixth-grade schoolmates have. But long before they're in sixth grade, they will have been. Soon these second graders will be as fluent, as competent as the current sixth graders, and they too will successfully graduate from Meadow Brook School after completing the eighth grade. Then they will join the Old Order community in which I could find no illiteracy during the time I spent there.

Instead, what I found was considerable literacy—above what might be called the functional level—among the adults and the children of the

Amish community in which I participated. On many afternoons, I sat at friends' kitchen tables, drinking coffee and discussing novels by James Michener and narratives by Corrie ten Boom. On Friday evenings, I sat at farmers' market picnic tables, sipping iced tea and discussing federal farm policies as they has been reported in local newspapers. And on Sunday afternoons, I relaxed on porch swings, enjoying homemade lemonade and discussing the latest Old Order community news described in "DIE BOTSCHAFT," the weekly newspaper that cites its mission as "serving Old Order communities everywhere."

Did these people become such constant, such voracious readers because of Woodrow Wilson and strawberry-eating experiences like those at Meadow Brook? Will their children go on to read as their parents do because they have experienced such drill and recitation, day after day, in the most basic of basals and textbooks and the most simple of phonics charts? For these are the reading tools and reading methods in this universally literate community. These seem to be what works there. The most basic of basics. Is that the lesson to be learned from the Amish? Is my intention to suggest that the back-to-the-basics people were right after all?

Let me share a few more scenes before I draw any conclusions.

* It's a cold January Sunday night. Four adults and four children are playing separate games of Dutch Blitz (a card game resembling double solitaire) or are building elaborate structures with dominoes. Suddenly, the compatibly busy hum is interrupted when Eli Fisher, father of the clan, begins reading aloud from a newsletter called DAIRY WORLD. All other activity stops as everyone attends to Eli's loudly expressive reading voice. "A farmer was driving his wagon down the road," he beings. "On the back of the wagon was a sign. It said, 'Experimental vehicle. Runs on oats and hay. Do not step in exhaust.'" Everyone laughs, including Eli, who goes on to read all the remaining jokes on the humor page of the publication. Games forgotten, everyone shares remembered riddles and jokes until it's time for bed.

* It's around noon, dinnertime, on a busy summer weekday. Everyone has come in from the field for the huge noon meal Anna has placed on the big farm table in the kitchen. Sixteen-year-old Sarah comes running in, followed closely by younger sister Katie. "The mail's here," she excitedly tells everyone. "And my circle letter came." As Sarah quickly deposits the rest of the mail on the table, she begins opening and reading her letter.

"Let me see," insists Katie.

"Let Sarah read it first," Anna gently replies, guiding her thirteen-year-old daughter away from her eldest.

When Sarah finishes reading, she does share the news, not just with Katie but with everyone, for they all are interested in what the letter says.

* It's a late fall evening, just before supper. Eli sits in his big chair, reading the local newspaper. On his lap, within the circle of his newspaper-holding arms, is his six-year-old son, Eli, Jr. On the arm of the chair perches eight-year-old Amos, reading the outside pages as his father and brother read the inside.

* It's just after breakfast on a weekday morning. Anna is looking for her favorite cookbook for a recipe she wants to prepare for dinner. She looks everywhere until, in complete frustration, she gives up and begins cooking something else. At dinner time, she shares the mystery of the disappearing cookbook with the family. "I know where it is," Eli matter-of-factly states. "I took it to the barn. I had to convert a formula from metric."

* It's a summer Sunday and the family is getting ready to go on a picnic. Katie announces she's taking "the book."

"What book?" I ask.

The one everyone's taking turns reading, Anna tells me. Sarah bought it at the local book and card shop, and she talked about it so intriguingly that Katie began reading it when her sister wasn't. Now everyone's waiting their turn, even little Eli, who's already read the covers and the first few pages, and even Daniel, who is fifteen and generally confines his reading to the Hardy Boys series and a set of 1950s era biographies for boys.

"You're gonna like this book," Katie explains to her mother and me. "You're not gonna get too far until you have tears."

I could go on and on and on. About the subscriptions almost everyone has, the letters almost everyone writes, and certainly about the family devotions conducted on non-church Sundays that everyone attends and at which everyone reads. I could point out that at all those coffee-drinking, iced-tea-sipping, and lemonade-tasting sessions I mentioned earlier there were usually children present—sitting around the table or on the porch, listening to the conversation and participating with considerable adult approval and support whenever they had questions or had read the book or newspaper under discussion.

But I suspect that the point is made, and the question I've raised has become a rhetorical one. Is it at Meadow Brook school that children learn about reading, about writing—about literacy—in Amish society? It is at their school that they practice reading and writing. It is at their school that most of the literate behaviors they learn at home are reinforced and rewarded. But it is in their homes and in their community that Amish children learn, first of all, why they should read—where they learn that to function effectively as adults, to be able to participate in their social order, to learn things that move them to laughter or to tears, they have to be able to read.

It is in their homes and community, too, that these children learn what counts as reading and what doesn't. It is from watching their parents and other community adults that they learn to discriminate among texts and to manage those considered necessary and appropriate. It is from these people that they first learn what to attend to and what to ignore. It is from these non-school teachers too that they learn the necessity of being able to follow written directions, to recall what they've read, to memorize things considered crucial, to synthesize information across texts, and to empathize with and learn from the people about whom they read—all in Amish-appropriate ways.

Conversely, I would also point out that literary appreciation and literary analysis or criticism are taught nowhere in this society, that they do not count as reading there at all. Not only did I neither hear nor participate in any discussions of "literature," per se, but I never even heard the words "character," "plot," or "theme" mentioned in any of the many discussions of reading that occurred. The people in books were just that—"people." What happened in books was "what happened" or "what people did." And the point of a book was what you felt and what you realized as a result of having read it. And, no, reader-response theory is not discussed there either, despite all the transacting with text that is obviously going on in this interpretive community.

It is because no such "literary" activities transpire in this community that no such activities transpire in its school either, and the school does not attempt to change that. The school reflects, supports, and helps create Amish society because the school is a reflection and creation of that society. Schoolboard members, teachers, and even textbook publishers are Old Order individuals who share the goals, values, norms and expectations of the families constituting the school community.

And just as that shared, reciprocal perspective explains why Meadow Brook school operates on most of the same definitions of reading and writing that its surrounding society does, so it explains why Meadow Brook students are equally willing to do phonics, spelling, and vocabulary exercises assigned in school even though no one reads decontextualized syllables, nonsense words, or random word lists outside of school: they do it because they see school as an integral part of the authoritarian, top-down, everyone-has-a-place-role-and-responsibility society in which they live all the time.

So just as they will obey their parents, their grandparents, their aunts and uncles, their ministers, and any other adults, these children will obey their teachers. Just as they will sit quietly and listen when adults are speaking at home, in others' homes, at community events, and at church, so they will sit quietly and listen in school. And just as in all those settings they will call all those adults except their parents and their grandparents by their first names, so they will address their teachers. For trust, respect, and accountability are universal in this society, part of the fabric of life across and within contexts and institutions. It took some time for me to stop involuntarily flinching each time Meadow Brook students called their teacher "Verna," but finally I realized: artificial, hierarchical markers of respect are unnecessary in a society where shared humanity matters more than individual status and where doing what you're told, doing what everyone else your age does, is nothing more and nothing less than doing what God—the ultimate authority—expects of you.

So what point am I making if it's not that all educators should return to the basics and cherish the basals? First, I'm suggesting that pedagogy should not be viewed in isolation, as so many educators and educational critics are wont to do. The Amish teach us that effective pedagogy is clearly derivative—derived from the culture and society that create the schools and train the teachers, and—more significantly perhaps—derived from the culture and society served by those schools and by those teachers. It is when those two societies—the one creating the schools and the one served by the schools—are distinctly different in terms of values, goals, expectations, and norms that to expect one universally applied pedagogy to be effective is ludicrous and would be laughable—were it not tragic in so many places in this country.

Let me exemplify this in reverse. When Sarah Fisher was 11 and in the sixth grade at Meadow Brook School, I was teaching sixth-grade English in a teamed middle school in my district. One day I brought Sarah to school with me, and she spent the day with one of our sections under the watchful, very excited eyes of two of the most sensitive girls in the group. It was a wonderful experience for everyone. On the way home, however, Sarah said to me, "I could never go to school here."

"Why not?" I asked her, truly not knowing because I had not been to Meadow Brook yet.

"Too much talking," she replied, shaking her head. "Our lessons are really different from yours." Looking back now, I realize how right Sarah was, in more ways than one.

The second point I'd like to make, the second lesson Amish education implies for mainstream educators, is that what we choose to teach, what we choose to count as curriculum in school, is not some monolithic notion of content, some set of skills, abilities, and ideas universally acknowledged as necessary and just. Those abilities that count as reading for the Amish, for example, are not a definitive list, and the Amish make no claim that they are. Instead, the Amish have clearly stated goals for their schools, goals that would be subverted if critical analysis, for instance, counted as reading or if Judy Blume, J.D. Salinger, or even William Shakespeare were read. So the Amish suggest we must reconsider what counts as reading—or as literacy—for ourselves, our students, and our society, and they warn us to be wary of anyone's supposedly definitive curricular lists.

Which brings me to my third point—one about the relationship between pedagogy, curriculum, and goals. Here I will use my own state of Pennsylvania as object lesson in light of the Amish example. Pennsylvania's "Ten Goals of Quality Education" include helping all children develop positive self-concepts, maintain emotional well-being, discover their creativity, and "prepare for a world of rapid change and unforeseeable demands" (Seiverling 1976). Yet in classrooms throughout my school district and every other Pennsylvania district with which I'm acquainted, students sit in rows as the Amish children do; they do ditto after ditto of mindless seatwork as the Amish children do; they read specially adapted, edited, dumbed down textbooks as the Amish children do; they spend their days circling, underlining, choosing, and filling in oral or written blanks with right answers as the Amish children do—all of which would be just fine if all of Pennsylvania's children were Amish. If that were the case, these learn-that-there's-one-right-answer and learn-to-be-passive lessons would be appropriate, matched to the educational goal of a school and society wanting "to prepare the child for the Amish or Mennonite way of living and the responsibilities of adulthood" (*Standards* 5).

But that is not the case in Pennsylvania or in many other places in this country. More than one right answer exists for most questions in our pluralistic society, and learned passivity works against anyone's becoming self-actualizing, let alone their "prepar[ing] for a world of rapid change and unforeseeable demands." So the Amish point out that pedagogy, curriculum, and goals should be coherent, not only with each other but with the expectations and needs of the children and the societies served by the schools.

A fourth point—one so obvious it is easy to overlook yet one so important I don't dare overlook it—concerns the human relationships necessary to accomplish anything positive in a school setting, or anywhere else for that matter. I have never been in a situation where there was more trust, more respect among human beings for each other than

I found among the Amish with whom I lived. It did not matter whether a person was male or female, an adult or a child, a minister, a teacher, a farmer, or a farmwife, Amish or English (as all non-Amish are to them). It did not even matter whether a person had a college degree. Everyone's inherent value as a human being deserving of respect was an assumption underlying every social contact every single day. And there was no hierarchy of respect, no sense that some people, but dint of some social status, deserved more and others less. Despite the fundamentally religious nature of Amish society, for example, ministers were not deferred to. No one was called sir or ma'am. No one "dressed for success" or surrounded themselves with status symbols of any kind meant to impress or cow other people. These people simple treated each other with respect because they believe all human beings are created equal and therefore deserve to be respected equally. Even Verna believed that about her students and their parents, and they all believed that about her. Need I say more?

That brings me to one final point. When people respect others, they listen to what those others have to say. Meadow Brook's teacher and school directors listened to what parents and students had to say about what should and did go on in their classroom, closing the school for one afternoon every six weeks to hold meetings expressly for this purpose. They looked at the society their children would be joining, and they wrote goals and curriculum and chose pedagogy coherent with that society. That is what enabled the school to serve the society and the society to support the school. Of course, in their situation that was easy: no educational experts were urging them to ignore essential social realities in favor of some supposedly essential elements of instruction. The Amish have no patronizing, educational father-knows-best tradition to overcome. I would suggest that we do.

Yet shouldn't our students know and share in the goals of our schools, THEIR schools? Shouldn't we consider their goals and their needs as they perceive them rather than as we assume them to be? Of course, as adults—not educational experts but American adults—we do know more about what college professors, office managers, and other employers expect from their employees, but shouldn't we tell our students what we know and allow them to choose goals of their own rather than imposing our choices on them? Yet how many English teacher—and I target English teachers because I am one—insist on Standard English in their classrooms because it's "right" or "better" or the only "acceptable" way to speak? Most? I don't know, but certainly too many. How ethnocentric is that? How inherently disrespectful? And as a result, how inevitably counter-productive and destructive of some children and some lives? If we truly respected the children we taught—and respected their families as well—wouldn't we work with them instead of on them or against them?

What conclusions, then can be drawn from these five points? What do they all imply? To me they say two centrally important things. First, they say that to understand what is happening inside a school, to understand why a school succeeds or why it fails, we have to look outside the school itself. Pedagogy and curriculum cannot be viewed in isolation. Teachers and administrators cannot be seen that way. And certainly children should not be decontextualized in that manner. The complex interplay of individuals and institutions, of methods and goals, of backgrounds, values and expectations are ignored only at our own peril. For such ignorance may lead to outrageous conclusions like the one a few years ago which told us that schools are responsible for creating a "rising tide of mediocrity" in this country and that schools, therefore, must be responsible for stemming that tide—which is an irresponsible oversimplification at best, an unconscionable, self-serving lie at worst.

My second conclusion is that: If, as the Amish experience suggests, literacy is best learned by people who are part of a community that sees individual and social value in reading and writing; if it is best learned when people have real reasons to learn it; if it is best learned by people who agree about what counts as reading and writing and what constitutes appropriate teaching behavior and learning behavior; and if it is best learned when those who are to teach it and those who are to learn it share goals for and expectations of each other, then mainstream American schools must soon deal with the schizophrenia manifest in our classrooms by forging a new community—one with shared values, understandings, goals and expectations, collaboratively arrived at and collectively acceptable.

To reach that kind of consensus, however, we must begin by recognizing the truth about where out students come from. Not the myths or the media images, but the truth. Just as I learned that the Amish are neither as naive nor pure as myth and media would have us all believe, so we must learn that our inner-city and minority children, for example, are not as spiritually, intellectually, and culturally impoverished as myth and media would suggest. A deficit model like the one currently popular provides no basis for understanding or trust, no foundation for cooperation or community.

Similarly, we must recognize the truth about where our teachers and administrators come from, even if that's an unpleasant, ethnocentric, chauvinistic, patronizing—though undeniably well-meaning—truth. We must realize that an elitist perspective like the one we've inherited has no sense of understanding or trust, no room for cooperation or community.

We must also recognize the pragmatic truth about where our schools have come from. The truth about a system originally designed to homogenize immigrants; to train people to willingly, quietly, passively work on industrial assembly lines for 12-14 hours a day. A system designed to socialize children to be seen and not heard, to speak only when spoken to, to respect their elders and to fear them, and above all, never to make waves. Such system, designed to make different children just like everyone else, has no patience for understanding or trust; it cannot permit cooperation or community.

It is from these recognized truths, from this look back at the Amish, that I am suggesting we forge our future. I am suggesting we forge new educational communities that are truly coherent with the best of our espoused values. I think Pennsylvania is right in wanting to develop the self-esteem, emotional well being, and creativity of every Commonwealth school child, in wanting to prepare them for what we know are unforeseeable futures. But to do that we must create schools and school communities where there is understanding and trust, where there can be true cooperation and true community, real respect and real opportunity for every single child and every single teacher in every single classroom.

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Culture, Family and Literacy Instruction: A Response to Fishman

Gary B. Moorman

It has been my professional experience that few keynote speeches accomplish the purpose of developing a perspective for conference attendees to discuss critical issues. An exception was Dr. Andrea Fishman's keynote speech, "Looking back for the future: Amish literacy and its implications for educators," at the 1989 American Reading Forum. It seems that conversations everywhere gravitated toward her stimulating presentation. I found myself continuously discussing and rehashing her speech—debating, condemning, praising, and generally using Amish literacy, culture, and schooling as a perspective to examine literacy, culture, and schooling in mainstream American society. When I returned to campus, I ordered her book (Fishman, 1988), and looked up an article in *Language Arts* (Fishman, 1987). And, using one of the advantages of the intimacy of professional relationships offered by ARF, I called Dr. Fishman and asked for a copy of her speech. It occurred to me that her study provided me with a structure to think through some issues that have been on my mind for some time, and hence I set about to write this response to her speech.

Contrary to much of the discussion at the conference,I am certain that it was not Dr. Fishman's intention to either praise or condemn Amish culture or schooling. There is certainly much to be admired about the Amish way of life—its simplicity, its sense of family, its harmony with nature. Moreover, to those of us whose lives revolve around literacy and literacy instruction, there is a fascination with the high levels of literacy and the near total absence of illiteracy. Conversely, the isolation, the patriarchal system, and the willingness of the Amish to selectively benefit from modern technology while refusing to contribute to it are issues which raise serious concerns. But these issues are moot; the American system of government guarantees the rights of the Amish to pursue their way of life. I would even go further to say that our pluralistic culture demands that their values be respected. Indeed, what Fishman's work makes marvelously clear is that because of their homogeneity and relative isolation from mainstream culture, there is much that we can learn from the Amish.

It seems to me that the central point of Fishman's presentation was that there is a coherence among the Amish community, family life and reading instruction in their schools. What her research demonstrates is that literacy is an integral part of Amish life. Mason (1984) argues that basic knowledge about function of print, form and structure of print, and conventions of reading must be in place before a child can learn to read. Amish children acquire this knowledge as they acquire membership in family and community. With little conscious effort, as a result of participation in day to day social life, Amish children become "literate" before they enter school and begin to learn how to "read."

For the Amish, literacy is embedded in culture and activity. Since their children are actively engaged in the culture, they enter school with basic knowledge about literacy already in place. The focus in school then becomes *reading* instruction. Lessons at the primary level adhere to direct instruction formats, emphasizing basic word-recognition skills and literal-level comprehension. Older children participate in recitation lessons which are highly teacher directed and focus on factual knowledge.

The danger is to jump to the conclusion that this instructional style leads to the universal literacy of the Amish community. The deeper insight is that instruction in Amish school reflects literacy as defined by activity in the Amish community. Reading and writing are tools used by the Amish to communicate with other members of the community. Acquiring basic information about the Amish way of life—particularly about religion, farming, and home-making—and entertaining themselves with books, magazines and newspapers defines Amish literacy and is reflected in the instruction in their schools. None of these basic literacy functions requires creativity or critical-thinking skills. In fact, creativity and critical thinking present a threat to the traditional, well-ordered, hierarchial Amish way of life. Literacy cannot be an emancipatory process; it can only provide one more avenue to conform to a system designed to insure the continued existence of Amish culture. There is no room in this system for questions, except how can one best fit into predetermined roles. Hence, there is no need for instruction aimed at creating independent, critical readers.

What, then, is there to be learned from an examination of Amish literacy? First, it seems that in most American schools it cannot be assumed that children come to school with the kinds of general understandings about literacy that Amish children demonstrate. In a pluralistic educational system, a primary aim of early schooling ought to be to develop a culture of literacy within each classroom. Skills in reading and writing would be requisite to membership in that culture. Students would gain basic understandings as they engage in literacy activities embedded in classroom activity, just as Amish children learn about literacy as they engage in family and community activities. It is crucial that the classroom culture be made so impelling, so attractive, and so exciting that all children will want to join in. Such classrooms are dependent on the sense of culture that children bring with them from membership in their own communities. Before we can establish these kinds of classrooms, it is critical that we understand the communities and families of the students. Schools cannot replace students' cultural backgrounds; they can only build on them.

Once basic knowledge about *literacy* is in place, *reading* instruction can begin. Seven decades of research leave little doubt that direct, intensive and sustained instruction in word recognition and other basic reading skills is highly effective (Adams, 1990; Chall, 1989). Such instruction can increase the power and precision of every reader, as well as overcome individual differences and deficits in reading achievement. The Amish experience demonstrates that students who recognize the role of reading and writing in the larger context of community literacy readily accept and prosper from basic reading instruction. However, in the absence of the insight that participation in the culture is dependent on literate behavior, this instruction invites wholesale failure. The American experience with minority education is a vivid example.

In practice, it would appear that a compromise in the current "Great Debate" (Chall, 1989) is called for. This debate pits "whole language" advocates (e.g. Altwerger, Edelsky, & Flores, 1987) against those who call for instruction which includes the direct teaching of reading skills (e.g. Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985). At its simplest level, the compromise would include extensive use of whole-language activities and approaches early in schooling, pre-school through perhaps early first grade. This would allow children to acquire knowledge about literacy through participation in classroom activities which demonstrate how the system works. Once most students in the instructional setting demonstrate an understanding of literacy, intensive instruction in basic word recognition and comprehension skills should begin. Such an approach is supported by Stahl and Miller's (1989) extensive review of whole-language and language-experience research.

A more sophisticated version of the compromise would weave direct instruction in basic skills into the whole-language portion of the sequence, but only for those students who demonstrate prerequisite understandings about literacy. Further, the start of basic instruction would not signal the end of the classroom culture that values and encourages literacy behaviors. Literacy instruction would be characterized by "authenticity" (Edelsky & Draper, 1989): students engaged in reading and writing activities that more closely resemble real-world tasks. Basal readers and content textbooks would be supplemented by newspapers, short stories, novels, factual books and other reading materials typical of adult reading materials. Students would write letters, stories, memos and reports, *not* to please teachers but to entertain a variety of different and real audiences. These literacy tasks should be accompanied by explicit (e.g. Duffy & Roehler, 1987; Pearson, 1984) and metacognitive (e.g. Armbruster & Brown, 1984; Baker & Brown, 1984) instruction aimed at helping students become strategic and independent in their use of basic reading skills.

An even more critical literacy education issue arises after students have acquired a basic level of reading proficiency. While basic levels of reading proficiency are adequate in Amish culture, full participation in highly technological American society requires high levels of critical and creative literacy. The ability to use reading and writing as higher-order cognitive tools demands instruction that is more sophisticated and more empowering than either direct, explicit or whole-language instruction. Current National Assessment of Educational Progress (1990) data would indicate that the problem in American education lies more in our inability to teach high school students to think critically than in an inability to teach younger children basic reading skills. How, then, can we begin to conceptualize reading instruction to meet the demands of the 21st century?

Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989) suggest a "cognitive apprenticeship" model where learning and content are embedded in authentic social and physical activity. Reading, writing, and other learning processes become cognitive tools whose strategic uses are understood within the context of meaningful knowledge acquisition. In this respect, cognitive apprenticeship is similar to the whole-language model of instruction in its recognition of the centrality of social activity to learning and knowing. However, similar to explicit instruction models, instruction in cognitive apprenticeship focuses on the teacher modeling appropriate learning behavior while articulating the cognitive processing that must accompany such behavior. This is not unlike, for example, how an expert chef trains an apprentice. Beginning with the apprentice looking over his or her shoulder, the chef models how to prepare an item while explaining the mental processes that accompany the preparation of the food. The apprentice then does the preparation while the chef directs. Finally, the apprentice does both the preparation and the explaining, while the chef provides comments to increase precision and understanding. All this activity is situated in a real kitchen, preparing real food for real diners.

It would appear that formal education would benefit greatly from a move (or perhaps a return) to education that places a premium on instruction embedded in social and work activity. We must begin to conceptualize knowledge and knowledge-acquisition processes such as reading as tools for problem solving, not as the end products of instruction. Classroom activity should be patterned on the social and work activity students will encounter after leaving school. For this to happen, schools must begin to develop social settings within the classroom where instruction mirrors the activity and learning that occur in real-world knowledge domains. Hence, math instruction would be patterned on the activity of mathematicians engaged in mathematical problem solving, history instruction on the activity of historians solving historical problems, and so on. Students then can acquire the basic insight that real workers in real jobs must have in order to be successful: knowledge is a useful tool for solving problems. I would argue that this is a very different insight from the one most students acquire in today's schools.

Beyond any doubt, I have over-extended the results of Fishman's study, and the intent of her keynote address. But then, that ought to be the function of a keynote address. Thank you, Dr. Fishman for your careful research and thought-provoking insight.

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Culture, Classrooms, and Literacy Instruction: A Response to Moorman

Andrea R. Fishman

One day late last July, Bernie Hayes called. He wanted me to write something for the ARF Yearbook: a response to Gary Moorman's response to my 1989 ARF speech. I had read Gary's piece when he wrote it; in fact, I had heard about and read it as he wrote it, in various stages of becoming. Yet I listened to Bernie's voice on my answering machine with great dismay. I can't do that now, I thought, much as I'd like to. I'm five weeks into a new job and only two months away from another, still unwritten, speech that I absolutely have to start working on.

I stood there staring at the machine, fighting the familiar "no, I can't; yes, I can; no, I can't" battle academics know so well, when suddenly it dawned on me: the yet-to-be written speech was for a conference at Appalachian State, for Gary's conference; writing a response to Gary's paper would be both a perfectly logical pre-writing activity for that next speech and an equally logical "turn" in the conversation Gary, I, and others have been conducting—by mail, by phone, and in person—ever since ARF last winter. So I want to begin this response by thanking ARF for facilitating the kind of personal-cum-professional relationships to which Gary refers in his "Response to Fishman." On that point he couldn't be more right.

In fact, Gary is right on a number of points he makes in his response to my speech. It most certainly "was not [my] intention to praise or condemn Amish culture or schooling," so I was amazed and distressed last December by the people who so adamantly attacked the Amish for what they considered the narrow-minded stunting of children's growth by a hypocritical, parasitic society—people who seemed to think I was praising what they perceived as an insidiously destructive, self-serving group no right-minded educator should tolerate.

First, let me clarify: while I do not agree with this particular assessment of the Amish, neither was my intent to present them as the opposite, as an ideal culture, without problems or contradictions, that outsiders should emulate in all things. I WAS presenting them as a model, however, when it comes to understanding the power of literacy for creating and maintaining a culture and the potential power of a coherent home/school/community relationship for effective transmission of that literacy. All we need do is look at the Amish to realize how continuity among their institutions and practices helps their children value and acquire literacy and to realize, conversely, why our children might not. That does not mean we have to adopt or adapt Amish institutions and practices; we don't even have to like them to learn from them.

So Gary was right: "the central point of [my] presentation was that there is a coherence among the Amish community, family life, and reading instruction in their schools," and the very fact of that coherence may be instructive for us.

Similarly, I see an object lesson for educators in the Amish experience, something we may want to avoid rather than emulate in any way at all. When the Amish make their children sit in silent classroom rows, when they instruct them to cover reams of dittoed worksheets with circles, lines, and single-word answers and to write reports on assigned topics using assigned formats, they are successfully creating the kind of passive, accepting, conforming people their culture needs to survive and grow. Keeping children in line—in lines, between lines, toeing lines—makes sense in Amish society. But no matter how long a tradition such practice has, it does not make sense in ours. In the homogeneous Amish world, social and cultural lines are clearly drawn; in pluralistic America they are not nearly so well marked. Our lines cross and they blur and there are significantly more of them, so our children need sociocultural road maps, not a single set of pre-determined directions.

If there was any praise implicit in my speech—and well there may have been—it was for a society that consciously acknowledges and works toward its own goals—a society that knows what it wants, that clearly articulates what it wants, and that works to accomplish what it wants—regardless of what others' goals may be. I respect the ability of the Amish to create, maintain, and transmit their culture so effectively. And I respect their right to have their own culture, even if it's one in which I would not choose to live. As Gary points out so well: "the American system of government guarantees the right of the Amish to pursue their way of life, [and] our pluralistic culture demands that their values be respected."

Gary goes on to suggest that mainstream schools and teachers need "to develop a culture of literacy within each classroom . . . [one] so impelling, so attractive, and so exciting that all children will want to join in." he grounds that suggestion in the example of Amish children who acquire an orientation toward literacy in home and community settings and who bring that orientation to school with them, wanting to participate in the in-school environment which mirrors the outside so closely. But our children are not always so highly motivated, so school-ready. So in our classrooms, children need to find reasons to participate, reasons that may not already exist for them. Before we can help them do this, however, "it is critical that we understand the communities and families of the students [because] schools cannot replace students' cultural backgrounds; they can only build on them."

And that is the point to which I would most like to respond, for within that point are the seeds of our potential success and our potential failure when it comes to improving literacy education in this country. I will begin responding—as a good ethnographer must—with a story, or in this hypoethical case, with a scenario. I ask you to recall Eli, Jr., the 6-year-old baby of the Fisher family, who followed his siblings into Meadow Brook School the year I was there. Eli had spent his entire life surrounded by literacy. He had seen everyone in his family read and write, in many genres; he had his own magazine subscription, participated in family oral reading of the Bible, and wrote his own letters to distant relatives and friends. If ever a child demonstrated "reading readiness," Eli, Jr. certainly did, right down to his attitude: he couldn't wait to become "a scholar."

Now imagine Eli, Jr., going not to Meadow Brook School but to the public elementary school in your own neighborhood or district. Eli is not a gregarious child; few young Amish children are. Eli has learned that his role in life is to watch and to imitate, not to speak or initiate. So he enters a first grade classroom, sits quietly in his seat, and does his very best not to call attention to himself. He is fine on the playground; Amish children know how to run around, play tag, and join teams. But in the classroom, how would he fare at Sharing Time? Eli could never stand—or even sit—in front of the group to show and tell about anything personal. How would he be at answering teacher questions? Eli could never raise his hand to call attention to himself. Responding to story starters about talking pencils or fantasy planets? Eli would have nothing to write. In conferences with his teacher to find out "what's the matter?" Eli would have nothing to say, for to him "the matter" would be in the setting—its norms and expectations--not in himself. But he could never articulate that. In his mind he would be "being good" and he wouldn't know what was wrong. Yet how would he be perceived? He's more than shy. Is he withdrawn? Troubled? Problematic? Less than bright? I hate to think about how Eli might be grouped in some mainstream schools and classrooms.

So when Gary calls for understanding and building on students' cultural backgrounds, he is calling for exactly what ethnography does best: putting people in context and attempting to understand them in the frames or the webs (see Geertz, 1973) of their own making, not of someone else's, no matter how well educated that someone else may be. As teachers and administrators we often think we know where children "are coming from"; current parlance even helps us oversimplify that term. We think that with our knowledge of developmental psychology and dysfunctional families we can correctly analyze the presenting behaviors of children in our schools. And in some cases we can—if only one or two variables make those children different from us or our cultural norms.

But when it comes to children significantly different from ourselves, children whose experience is significantly different from our own, we often move into a defensive, ethnocentric mindset that we believe is both necessary and helpful. If children are poor or foreign or members of most any minority, we assume that we know "where they are coming from"—and it's rarely a good place. We assume that they come from homes, from neighborhoods, from cultures that somehow must be inferior, deficient in some way, making their lives and, by extension, their selves deficient in some way too. With that as a given, we then offer to take these children away from their mean streets and their meaningless lives, to help them enter a world of our making, infused with our meanings.

I don't want to suggest that wanting to help children improve their socioeconomic condition is bad or cruel; of course it isn't. What is bad, what is cruel, is seeing children, their families, their homes and their neighborhoods as deficient and attempting to make them see that too. Poor parents, non-English-speaking parents, single parents can and do love their children, and their children love them as well. Theirs are very complex, very sophisticated cultures and literacies, whether in barrios or ghettos, the Appalachians or the delta, among people wearing $100 high-top sneakers or $1.95 rubber sandals. And those cultures, those literacies, are not deficient; they are different, equally valuable ones, especially in the eyes of their children.

Which explains why telling Eli Fisher that his family, friends, and neighbors are wrong, telling him that self-disclosure, originality, and competition are good, would not be the way to persuade him of anything. The sub-text of that message would be all too clear: we neither value nor respect his family or his community; therefore, we neither value nor respect him—unless he is willing to become one of us and abandon all of them.

That's a long way of explaining why Gary is so right: schools must build on the cultures children bring, not denigrate, disregard or attempt to dispose of them, for that is how we've disposed of so many children for so long.

I've now responded to one of Gary's points by taking it on a tangent clearly my own. I'd like to do the same with his not-so-modest proposal for reframing and restructuring high school education—something of no concern to the Amish but of considerable concern to me, as someone who has spent many years teaching high school English and who more recently teaches high school teachers. Gary's apprenticeship model has tremendous appeal. "'Cognitive apprenticeship' ... embedded in authentic social and physical activity" does seem to take the direct instruction model and contextualize it in a whole-language/whole-life sort of way. And it has the potential to succeed for reasons even beyond that merging of approaches, reasons extending beyond those Gary cites but seemingly implicit in the chef's apprentice example he gives.

The first implicit source of success has to do with student-apprentices' relationship to what they are learning. A chef's apprentice—or a mason's apprentice, a student nurse, a law clerk—knows knowledge is useful for solving problems and cares about that fact for two reasons many of our high school students don't have. First, the problems those apprentices must solve are THEIR problems. People in most apprenticeship situations have chosen to be in them; they "own" their attendant problems, and they want to own their solutions. How may students in our secondary schools have that kind of vested interest in their work? How many see schoolwork as "real" work, as their work? That does not mean vocational or directly pre-professional education is the only valid variety, nor does it call for "relevance" in the '60s sense of that word. What it does call for is schoolwork "embedded in AUTHENTIC social and physical activity," that is, real reading, real writing, and real thinking that can be meaningful to students who are real people, not blank slates, empty vessels, or interchangeable parts in the machine that too often is school.

Which is directly related to the second reason student-apprentices have for caring about and succeeding in their work. Most learners in apprentice situations are treated like important, valuable people in the process of doing something important and valuable. How many students in biology, algebra, or American literature classes are given that much respect or have that much motivation to be successful there? How many of our teenagers feel respected by schools that tell them what courses they may and may not take, what topics they may and may not read or write about, that even tell them when they may and may not leave the classroom to use the lavatory? If schools cannot conceive of students owning their own educations and their own lives, how can the students do that themselves? And without ownership and self respect, how can they be expected to care?

The second implicit source of success in Gary's model is the corollary of the first: it is the teacher's relationship to what she is teaching. In an apprenticeship situation, the teacher becomes not just master, but mentor, and her mastery is not over people but over her art or her science. Gary's master chef does not just stand in the kitchen and give orders to her apprentices; she models the skills she is teaching. Following from that example, teachers of writing must write; teachers of reading must read; teachers of history must explore history; teachers of science must explore science. That may mean struggling through drafts, doing research, or performing experiments "while [to quote Gary] articulating the cognitive processing that must accompany such behavior." It surely does not mean standing apart from students, lecturing, giving assignments, grading papers, and only asking questions to which they already know the answers.

I go back to Eli, Jr., this time not in first grade. Eli at 16 would need to feel just as valued, just as important as Eli at 6. He would need to know why he was being asked to do certain things and why he should do them in terms of his own life, not his teacher's. It would not be enough to say, "Eli, you need this knowledge to solve this problem: if he could not imagine owning the problem, just as it is not enough for more mainstream students if they cannot imagine owning their own education—and if their teachers can't conceive of student ownership or teacher mentorship either.

Excellence: What Is It?
Whose Job Is It?
IRA/ARF Cosponsored Session

Patricia S. Koppman

Excellence—Today's Buzzword

In the last year or two, *excellence* and *literacy* have been our educational buzzwords. I just dare you to ask somebody to define those two words. Each person you asked would give you a different definition. So I looked up *excellence* in a dictionary; after all, I wanted to be absolutely correct. The suggested meaning was "with quality" and "outstanding" and "extremely good of its kind." To me that sounded like a dog show!

I also have become aware that it is okay to change labels or titles. In 1987, the National Food and Drug Administration decided that we were not going to call our beef *Good* anymore. We're going to call it *Select*. So now, the very same cow is going to become select instead of good! We move terms around to suit our whim or need.

Therefore, I am concerned that our teachers and those students you are teaching to become teachers, and the teachers with whom I work do not and will not know what we are talking about when we say, "We want excellence." I am most concerned, however, about our governors who are meeting now to decide what we educators ought to be doing—decisions that are ultimately made in terms of political, not academic, criteria!

Those of us here at ARF may understand excellence in education, but how will we be able to get the message to the people out there—the general public? Everyone knows that we all want excellence. Of course we do. It's amazing that it would even be insinuated that we don't. We have always wanted excellence, and I think teachers have always worked toward it. But let's not forget, excellence is a journey, not a destination.

One statistic that came out of NAEP and Department of Education a few years ago was that in the *olden days*, reading and being competent in mathematics was *literacy*, and was *excellence*. Today, what are we talking about as excellence? In 1910, the average 25-year-old in this nation had an eighth-grade education, and we called that excellence. I know, because my grandfather was one of them. He was a southern preacher, and as he went from town to town preaching, they thought he was excellent. He never blamed a teacher for not teaching him more; rather, he always commented, with fondness and respect, about those wonderful teachers who taught him and enabled him to be who he was. I'm sure you have some of those same types of memories.

By 1950, we had moved ahead in this nation. The average 25-year-old had a ninth-grade education. But by 1978, and every year since then, the average U.S. 25-year-old has had a twelfth grade education. True, that doesn't mean that all students graduate, and, yes, we do have adult literacy problems and other educational concerns. But my concern is that we don't understand and share with the public out there what we mean when we talk about excellence is. I want to suggest to you what parents and the public think excellence is, and then let us decide how we can help to change these false impressions.

Public Conceptions of Excellence

Every summer, I teach at Utah State for Bernie Hayes. Several years ago, we brought in more than 150 parents, from all over the state of Utah. We asked them, "If schools could do only one thing for your child, what would be the one thing that you would want schools to do?" How do you think parents in your community would respond to this question? I confess, I was hoping that reading would be their major concern and desire.

The number-one answer of those parents was, "Get them to grade level." Now, folks, if you stop and think about it, that's also what they say in Pennsylvania, in Florida, in California—throughout the U. S. I am sorry to say, but it is we who have caused that! We have caused it by making *grade level* more important than anything else. At least that is the message we send. For example, a parent conference may begin like this: "Johnny is reading below grade level." True? Of course, it is true. Grade level dominates everything we do: report cards, special services, grade placement, retention, remedial assistance, etc. Who determines grade levels? Not the teachers, not the superintendents—but publishers! Again the noneducators setting the standards. I have authored for a couple of basal reading programs. When we wrote the third-grade-level materials, whatever it was that we said was third grade became third grade! Every kid who completed that level was supposed to know what we put into the third grade book.

So you see, we haven't really defined what *excellence* is, and so lots and lots of people speak of it and expect that it will be whatever happens when, and if, their child "is at grade level." The message we are giving to the public is that if schools would try harder we could actually have all students nearly equivalent, and above the midpoint on the normal curve. The normal curve would have only one part, the upper half—the above-level part! So what I'm trying to say to you today is that we, as educators, have to become more knowledgeable about what *excellence* is and how to convey this information to the public.

Second, the parents said that excellence was knowing all the skills. Parents felt that learning skills was a very high priority for their children. I'm afraid that is also the feeling transmitted by many school districts. Just investigate school districts' major goals and, I guarantee you, skills and skill tests will be high on the list. They can even be a whole-language school, or literature-based school, or integrated-language-arts school, and they will still have skill lists. Now, don't misunderstand me; I am not opposed to skills. But I think we have sent the wrong message by continuing to rank skill lists so high on our priorities. We have, as a result, given parents and the general public the idea that knowing these isolated skills is a large part of excellence. Are we busier marking little boxes (indicating that they know the skill) than we are in finding out whether or not they know how to use the skill in their everyday life? We're putting more and more money—$3.5 million this year—into basic skills and remediation and hardly any into thinking or the application of skills.

Is *excellence* teaching children to want to learn? I think it is really interesting that the concept of *cultural literacy* has been introduced at this time and that we now have a list of things that culturally literate people should know while at the same time we are talking about the fact that we should teach students not 'things' but how to think, learn, apply and develop the desire to *find out* and to be informed, in order to be literate.

So we have a contradiction here in what it is we are asking of teachers. Should they be teaching students facts? Or should they be teaching students to *think* and to want to find and understand the facts—in other words, to be motivated? That was the third thing that parents said. "I want you to make my child want to learn." Well, folks, I grew up in Kentucky, and my Dad had a very interesting way of motivating us—he opened the door each morning and said, "Thou shalt be motivated!" We knew what that meant. We don't do that with kids anymore. Teachers tell me that they spend more time getting students excited about what they are going to do than in actually teaching the lesson. Children are not coming to school eager to learn, but then maybe they are learning this attitude from society itself.

Recently I was in Albuquerque, and when we awakened one morning, there was a slight snowfall on the ground. I turned on the TV to catch the news. Instead of the newscaster saying, "There will be no school today," he said, "Kids, You don't have to go to school today!" When we approach learning with that attitude, we are telling students that there is no need to *want* to learn. Rather, just come to school and we will pour it in and you will learn with no effort on your part! Excellence suffers from poor attitudes about learning.

Fourth, and last, on the parents' list of excellence, they wanted schools to teach their children to be successful. I said to them, "What is success?" They responded that success was being able to get a good job—that is, to make money. So now I hope you see that everything that the parents listed is something that people see as being a part of excellence. Each person has a different opinion—a different goal for the schools and their children.

What is Excellence?

I believe that excellence in public education is when we work with youngsters so that they are learning at their own level. Their own learning level. We must help teachers to understand that we have a lot of children in our 'low' groups who are at, or above, their capacity. We are busier working with them than we are with the kids who have more potential and are doing little or nothing. So *attaining their own level of ability*—that is excellence, at least for the general public. As educators, we may set higher goals for ourselves. Those who eventually choose education for their profession will likewise eventually set higher goals for themselves. But in public education, I believe it is when we can help each student achieve his or her potential that we have an *excellent* program. Excellence is when we help a student to become a learning student, not a learned one. Nature does not demand perfection, only that we grow. That is how public education must be, as well.

Excellence Is a Journey

Excellence is a journey, not a destination. We talk about *excellence* as though it is somewhere we are going and as though when we get there we will be finished. I want to remind each of us today that we finally *get there*, they'll want us to go further. So there will never be a level called *excellence* that we can reach. However, each day, with each student, we can continue along the path of excellence, if we will just be honest and share the true meaning of excellence with our public out there.

I would like to close now, with a poem that Jerry wrote for the conference.

What a lovely reading conference
At The Colony Resort.
We have meetings in the morning,
Then we hit the tennis court!

With the weather warm and sunny
Here in gorgeous Sarasota,
It's sure better in December
Than in frozen North Dakota!

We'll review and contemplate
Achieving Excellence in Reading,
And we'll gather information
For our nation's schools we're leading.

We'll be back again next year
Like any fine and worthy chef,
Making recipes for reading
And promoting A R F.

Jerry W. Koppman

A Comparison of Student and Teacher Perceptions of Students At Risk

Richard J. Telfer, Robert E. Jennings, George McNinch, Reed Mottley

Much has been written in the past few years about "at-risk" students. Whole issues of professional publications (*Educational Leadership*, February 1989; *Journal of Reading*, April 1990) have focused on suggestions and programs for students who are at risk. As a result of this emphasis, many programs have been mandated and developed at state and local levels. Conceptions differ, however, about what these recommendations and programs should be. Some focus on the academic disabilities exhibited by some of these students (See Slavin & Madden, 1989). Others conclude that academic learning is not appropriate for at-risk students and provide job training programs instead. Others focus on the irrelevance of school for these students and try to make school more meaningful for the individual student (Hamby; 1989; Newmann, 1989). Still others attempt to restructure the schools (Madden, Slavin, Karweit & Livermon, 1989).

All of these differing conceptions of what at-risk programs should involve share a concern for student learning. What they do not share is a common understanding of the problem. Students who are at risk are not just those who have weak academic skills (Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, & Rock, 1986; National Association of School Social Workers, 1985; Business Advisory Commission of the Education Commission of the States, 1985). While programs and suggestions that focus on academic disabilities are valuable and necessary for many at-risk students, attempting to solve at-risk students' problems solely with remedial programs is likely to be unsuccessful. In fact, the recommendations of Greene and Uroff (1989), Newmann (1989), and Hamby (1989) suggest the problem may be compounded by traditional remedial programs. These remedial programs may not only be ineffective; they may also be counterproductive if they focus on skill deficiencies in an attempt to solve a problem of self-esteem, disengagement, and alienation.

An element that needs to be emphasized in at-risk programs is the role of the student. Many of the programs and recommendations are imposed on students who are identified as at risk, but the students are rarely asked for input (Newmann, 1989). That is, these students are required to take remedial classes, are segregated from other students, and are place in job-preparation programs, but they are rarely consulted about their needs.

In this study we attempted to consult the students and their teachers. The study looks at students' and teachers' perceptions of what it means to be "at risk." High school students, both those who were identified as at risk and those who were not, were asked to indicate which of 20 factors they associated with being "at risk." These subjects were also asked to explain what would be most helpful for those students who are at risk. In addition, teachers were asked to respond to the same requests. The study had two major purposes: (a) to identify the perceptions of students and teachers about what is meant by at risk and what is necessary to help students who are at risk and (b) to compare the perceptions of students and teachers as to the relative importance of the identified at-risk behaviors and suggestions.

Methods

Senior high students (182) in four small cities were surveyed about their perceptions and suggestions related to at-risk students. Of these students 82 had been identified by district criteria as being at risk. The district criteria varied from district to district but typically included truancy and poor grades and reflected teacher recommendations. An additional 100 students were selected from the total school population. In addition, 79 high school teachers were surveyed. The survey consisted of two major parts, one focusing on perceptions, and one on suggestions.

The study began with a brief explanation of what is meant by the term "at risk" (See Appendix). As part of this explanation, each individual was given a one-paragraph written explanation of the term. Students and teachers were then asked to fill out the two-part survey. The first part of the survey consisted of a 20-item questionnaire (See Appendix), developed from social, ethnic, and behavioral at-risk factors suggested by a review of the literature. In this questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate on a Likert scale how likely persons with specific characteristics were to be considered "at risk." The second part of the survey consisted of three open-ended questions: (a) What could "at-risk" students do that would help them no longer to be at risk? (b) What should teachers do to help "at-risk" students? and (c) What can be done by school officials to help "at-risk" students? Students and teachers responded in writing.

Data Analysis

Student and teacher responses to the 20-item questionnaire were tabulated and then analyzed. The total number of students and teachers who filled out the questionnaire exceeded the 25 per subgroup per state that had been established as a goal. To facilitate comparisons, 25 questionnaires from each subgroup were randomly selected for analysis. In several instances a subgroup had fewer than 25, since the districts did not identify enough at-risk students in the randomly selected classes; in no cases did a subgroup have more than 25. In order to develop profiles for comparing the groups, descriptive statistics were calculated on each item for each of the three subgroups: at-risk students, not-at-risk students, and teachers. The total responses, thought to represent a broad composite of at-risk behaviors, were compared across the three subgroups using an analysis of variance.

Responses to the open-ended questions were read, grouped, and analyzed. The written protocols were numbered and photocopied. The responses were then read by two independent raters, who knew neither the identity nor the group of the individuals responding. Categories of responses were established using the following procedure. Two readers independently read through the same 25 protocols and identified logical categories for the responses on those 25 protocols. The resultant categories were combined to form five to ten categories of responses for each of the three open-ended questions. The responses on all protocols were then classified into the categories. Minor adjustments in the categories were made during the analysis. For example, the category "seek support" was originally two categories: "seek support-from adults" and "seek support-from peers." Because the responses often referred to general support or to support from both adults and peers, the categories were combined. The minor adjustments necessitated some reclassification.

Two graduate students in reading education served as raters, tending and classifying the responses on the 342 protocols. The raters worked independently. Periodically, the results were compared and differences were resolved in meetings with the graduate students and one of the investigators. Before resolving differences, the raters agreed on 80% of the classifications. The disagreements were almost entirely related to the number of categories mentioned in an open-ended response, where one rater or the other identified an additional category of response on a protocol.

Percentages of respondents who mentioned a particular category were then calculated for each of the three questions. These percentages of responses were then placed in contingency tables and Chi Square statistics were calculated, comparing the patterns of responses for at-risk students, not-at-risk students, and teachers.

Results

The responses to the 20-item questionnaire will be discussed first, by subgroups.

Not-At-Risk Students. These students were relatively homogeneous in their responses to the 20 items on the questionnaire (Table 1). Mean perceptions ranged from a high of 4.03, "being a parent" to a low of 2.03 "being Asian." The mean response was a Somewhat Likely 3.06

Table 1

Summary of Responses for Not-At-Risk Students, (N = 100)

Stem		Mean	SD	Mode
1.	being a parent	4.030	1.322	5
2.	missing school one day a week	2.778	1.130	3
3.	missing school two or more days a week	3.758	1.153	5
4.	taking drugs occasionally	3.394	1.176	3
5.	drinking alcohol occasionally	3.010	1.176	3
6.	being a poor reader	3.310	2.312	3
7.	being on welfare	2.820	1.175	3
8.	being poor	2.840	1.245	3
9.	having parents who are divorced	2.540	2.294	-
10.	flunking one class each semester	3.384	1.140	3
11.	getting into trouble with the law	3.670	1.025	4
12	disliking school	3.430	1.297	3
13.	being suspended from school	3.260	1.079	3
14.	being Black	2.280	1.613	1
15.	being Hispanic	2.040	1.222	1
16.	being Asian	2.030	1.201	1
17.	not speaking English well	2.680	1.109	2
18.	finding school to be difficult	3.410	1.111	3
19.	being truant regularly	3.340	1.257	4
20.	not reading well	3.230	1.196	-

Composite Mean = 3.061　　SD = 0.611

The greatest range of variance, as reflected by the wide standard deviations, was shown on items 6 and 9, "being a poor reader" and "having parents who are divorced." The perception of the possible impact of these factors on school completion or success varied widely within the group. The Not-At-Risk students did not agree on the impact of these factors.

Inspection of the modes, the most commonly selected response per item, indicated that the Not-At-Risk students were in accord that "being a parent," mode of 5, was a factor Very Likely to impact success or retention. Also, a mode of 5 on item 3, "missing school two or more days a week," indicated that many of these students felt that attendance is related to perceived school success or retention.

It appeared that Not-At-Risk high school students were somewhat conservative in their selection of at-risk factors that are destructive to success or retention in school.

At-Risk Students. At-Risk students were somewhat more varied in their perceptions of the possible impact of negative factors on school success or retention than were Not-At-Risk students (Table 2). The perceptions of the At-Risk students ranged from a high of 3.79, "disliking school," to a low of 1.756, "being Hispanic." The mean response of 1.75, with a restricted standard deviation of 0.92, seemed to indicate that ethnicity was not considered a significant factor in retention or possible academic success by this group. This conclusion was further supported by inspection of the modes for the four ethnic questions (14, 15, 16, and 17). In each case, the most commonly selected response was 1, "very Unlikely," while 3 of the 4 means ranged from "Unlikely" to "Very Unlikely." It appears that At-Risk students were also somewhat conservative in their responses to the items of the questionnaire. At-Risk students' selection averaged out to be in the "Somewhat Likely" category. Additionally, the high frequency of 3 as a mode further reinforces this finding.

Both At-Risk and Not-At-Risk students viewed the ethnic items as having little potential importance. They rated these factors as having low relationships with academic success or retention in school. Both groups perceived the behavioral choice "being a parent" as important to the question of success or retention in high school.

Table 2

Summary of Responses for At-Risk Students, (N = 82)

Stem		Mean	SD	Mode
1.	being a parent	3.695	1.264	5
2.	missing school one day a week	2.902	1.140	3
3.	missing school two or more days a week	3.573	1.306	4
4.	taking drugs occasionally	3.268	1.287	4
5.	drinking alcohol occasionally	3.110	1.277	4
6.	being a poor reader	3.061	1.327	3
7.	being on welfare	2.519	1.333	1
8.	being poor	2.667	1.285	3
9.	having parents who are divorced	2.753	1.299	3
10.	flunking one class each semester	3.110	1.305	3
11.	getting into trouble with the law	3.488	1.308	4
12.	disliking school	3.790	1.242	5
13.	being suspended from school	2.976	1.276	3
14.	being Black	2.024	1.247	1
15.	being Hispanic	1.756	0.924	1
16.	being Asian	1.815	1.014	1
17.	not speaking English well	2.573	1.286	1
18.	finding school to be difficult	3.253	1.182	4
19.	being truant regularly	3.162	1.391	4
20.	not reading well	3.049	1.226	3

Composite Mean = 2.927 SD = 0.654

Teachers. Teachers appeared to be more homogeneous in their reactions to the questionnaire than either of the two student groups (Table 3.) Teachers generated a mean response of 3.53 (Likely) with a restricted standard deviation of 0.05. It appeared that teachers' groups' responses, unlike the two student groups', moved away from the middle of the scale to the more definite category of Likely. Teachers tended to perceive many of the behaviors as detrimental to estimated academic success or school retention.

Table 3

Summary of Responses for Teachers, (N = 79)

Stem		Mean	SD	Mode
1.	being a parent	4.344	0.996	5
2.	missing school one day a week	4.062	0.871	5
3.	missing school two or more days a week	4.738	0.509	5
4.	taking drugs occasionally	3.877	0.875	4
5.	drinking alcohol occasionally	3.523	0.920	4
6.	being a poor reader	3.846	0.972	-
7.	being on welfare	3.000	0.967	3
8.	being poor	2.688	0.814	3
9.	having parents who are divorced	2.603	0.890	3
10.	flunking one class each semester	3.862	0.933	4
11.	getting into trouble with the law	4.262	0.691	4
12.	disliking school	4.123	0.998	5
13.	being suspended from school	3.815	1.276	4
14.	being Black	2.468	0.804	3
15.	being Hispanic	2.444	0.799	3
16.	being Asian	2.097	0.900	2
17.	not speaking English well	3.302	0.927	4
18.	finding school to be difficult	3.585	0.950	3
19.	being truant regularly	4.631	0.575	5
20.	not reading well	3.754	0.902	4

Composite Mean = 3.531 SD = 0.049

On five of the items, 1, 2, 3, 12, and 19, teachers recorded high mean scores, above 4, or *Likely*. Each of these items had a mode of 5, or *Very Likely*. Four of these five items related to attendance or attitude. The other item, "being a parent," ranked third, with a perception of 4.3 Teachers perceived attitude and attendance as being important in profiling at-risk students. In addition, early parenthood was viewed by teachers as an important behavioral factor, a possible signal of at-risk behavior or status.

Teachers apparently viewed the ethnic questions differently than did the student groups. Teachers gave more neutral, *Somewhat Likely*, mean responses to these four items. Also, the teachers' modes were more consistently in the 3's while the students' modes were typically 1. Teachers viewed ethnicity as a possible factor (Somewhat Likely), while students appeared to reject (Unlikely) this cultural factor as a source of at-risk behavior.

In order to investigate directly the question "do the three groups perceive the behaviors differently," an analysis of variance design was selected. In the analysis, the dependent variable was the average total response to the questionnaire and the independent variables were the three categories of At-Risk (student), Not-At-Risk (student), or Teacher. The results of the analysis, reflected in Table 4, indicate significant differences among the three groups (F = 23.12, df 2, 258, p < .01) on the response to the cumulative average score. Comparison of the mean differences by Scheffe analysis indicate that the two student groups, At-Risk and Not-At-Risk, differed significantly from the Teacher group in their overall response to the items of the 20-item behavioral scale.

It appears that both Not-At-Risk (x = 3.06) and At-Risk (x = 2.93) students perceived the 20 risk items as less detrimental or less related to school success or retention than did the Teachers (x = 3.53). Students viewed the behaviors reflected by the questionnaire as "Somewhat Likely" to be harmful to high school success or retention, while Teachers perceived the behaviors as "Likely" to be harmful to school success or retention.

Table 4

Comparison of Composite Scores
on 20-Item Questionnaire for Three Groups

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F
Between Groups	2	15.265	7.632	23.12
Within Groups	258	85.171	.33	p<.0001
Total	260	100.436		

The comparisons of the responses to each of the open-ended questions are shown in Tables 5, 6, & 7. Open-Ended Question 1, What could "at-risk" students do that would help them no longer be at risk?, is summarized in Table 5. The Chi Square analysis indicated that the responses were not significantly different. Visual inspection of the results shows that "seek support," "do something—attitude," and "do something—behavior/study" were the most common responses for all three groups. Nearly one-half of the At-Risk students supplied a response that fit in the "do something—behavior/study".

Table 5

Question 1—What At-Risk Students Can Do Percentages of Responses by Category

Category	Teachers	At-Risk	Not At Risk
Seek support	39.2	28.6	35.0
Do Something—Attitude	36.7	27.0	37.0
Do Something—Attendance	19.0	17.5	13.0
Do Something—Behavior/Study	31.6	47.6	38.5
Do Nothing	1.2	3.2	0.5
Other	8.9	14.3	8.5

The Chi Square analysis of the responses to Question 2, What should teachers do to help "at-risk" students?, indicated significant differences ($X^2 = 31.7, p < .05$). Visual inspection of the responses (see Table 6) showed that teachers saw the categories "be available—time/help," "motivate and build success", and "develop special programs" as more important than did either group of students. The highest responses for all three groups were in the category "show concern." Almost one-half of the students supplies responses that fit in this category.

Table 6

Question 2—What Teachers Can Do Percentages of Responses by Category

Category	Teachers	At-Risk	Not At-Risk
Show Concern	39.2	47.6	42.5
Be Available—Time/Help	34.2	15.9	24.0
Modify Teaching	26.6	22.2	25.0
Motivate and Build Success	29.1	14.3	11.0
Be Aware of Student Needs	10.1	7.9	6.0
Monitor Progress	5.1	1.6	2.0
Be Human	2.5	1.6	2.5
Communicate with Parents	10.1	6.3	6.0
Develop Special Programs	11.4	0.0	4.0
Other	10.1	15.9	4.5

The responses to Question 3 are also significantly different ($X^2 = 58.59$, $p < .01$). Of particular note, teachers mentioned "provide programs," "encourage teachers/students," "link with community," and "modify the curriculum implementation" much more than either group of students. Students stressed listening/compassionate attitude more often.

Table 7

Question 3—What School Officials Can Do
Percentages of Responses by Category

Category	Teachers	At-Risk	Not At-Risk
Provide Programs	40.5	12.7	26.0
Encourage Teachers/Students	13.9	6.3	3.5
Change Student Policies	7.6	4.8	7.5
More and Better Professionals	12.7	4.8	6.0
Modify Curriculum Implementation	19.0	7.9	11.0
Link with Community	17.7	4.3	6.5
Provide Money and Materials	8.9	0.0	0.0
Listen/Compassionate Attitude	15.2	30.2	28.5
Other	11.4	27.0	19.0

Discussion

The responses of students and teachers differed in a number of areas on both the 20-item questionnaire and the open-ended questions. Differences between the two groups of students were much less evident.

In responses to the questionnaire, teachers seemed more sensitive to the sampled risk factors than did the student groups. That is, they seemed to see those risk factors as more important than did the students. Students appeared to be less aware of the impact of risk factors on predicted success or school retention than were their teachers. Students strongly discounted the impact of the ethnic factors, while teachers were more reserved toward the cultural items. Teachers perceived attitude and attendance factors as important predictors of academic success or school retention. Teacher reaction differed from student perception on the total survey regardless of student group placement. Teachers recorded higher mean scores (Likely to Very Likely) than students recorded to the personal behavior item "being a parent."

The responses to the open-ended questions also showed differences between the two groups of students and the teachers. Specifically, At-

Risk students differ from their teachers in their perceptions of what teachers and school officials should do. At-Risk students see "showing concern" and "listening" as important, while teachers suggest more active roles, such as "motivate and build success" and "provide programs." In addition, differences were seen between the two groups of students on many of the responses.

Remedial programs as a solution were rarely mentioned by any of the respondents. Teachers were more likely to mention programs, although the programs mentioned were non-academic at least as often as academic in focus. The At-Risk students identified "showing concern" and "listening" most often.

Recommendations

The differences between the perceptions of students and teachers may indicate a lack of knowledge or understanding on the part of students. If so, an appropriate course of action would be to continue to have programs established by those who know what should be done. On the other hand, the differences in perceptions may suggest that students and teachers know different aspects of at-riskness. If that is the case, students must be involved in developing and evaluating at-risk programs. By not consulting students, we overlook information vital to any successful at-risk program. The differences between the two groups of students, although smaller than the differences between teachers and students, suggest that looking only at the at-risk students gives an incomplete picture.

The results of this study strongly suggest that at-risk programs must focus on other factors than mere academic deficiencies. The strong message in the responses to the open-ended questions is that interpersonal relations are very important to any at-risk program.

Knowledge of student and teacher perceptions of at-risk students will help us understand what these students are like and how they might most profitably be helped. This understanding may help focus at-risk instruction on students rather than on programs. While many impressive programs exist to help students deal with their academic learning difficulties, in order for these programs to work for at-risk students the programs must be applied with an understanding also of the non-academic needs of at-risk students. The results of this study will help us better focus on both the academic and non-academic needs of at-risk students.

Future research could examine in more detail the differences between teacher and student perceptions of what it means to be at risk. For example, the differences in the suggestions made by students and teachers should be examined. Specifically, differences in the specifics of curriculum modification, assessment modification, program implementation, and demonstration of concern might be explored.

A second area of further study would be to look at the at-risk programs to see if the practices recommended by students and teachers are being implemented. This study might also examine whether the programs that are perceived to be successful are more consistent with student perceptions or with teacher perceptions.

A third area of additional research would be to implement some of the students' suggestions in at-risk programs. Comparisons could then be made between different approaches, for example, between student-oriented and academic-oriented approaches.

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Appendix

At-Risk Students

There have been a number of definitions of what it means to be an "at risk" student. For example, one state defines "high risk" students as those who exhibit the following characteristics: "absenteeism, truancy, frequent tardiness, poor grades, low math and reading scores, failure in one or more grades, limited extracurricular participation, lack of identification with school, failure to see the relevance of education to life experience, boredom with school, disruptive behavior and rebellious attitudes towards authority, verbal and language deficiencies, and inability to tolerate structured activities." Another state defines at-risk students as those "whose aspirations and achievement may be negatively affected by stereotypes linked to race, national origin, language background, gender, income, family status, parental status, and disability."

Directions: Circle the number that indicates how likely the following individual is to be considered "At Risk" (1=very unlikely, 2=unlikely, 3=somewhat likely, 4=likely, 5=very likely).

1. 1 2 3 4 5 being a parent
2. 1 2 3 4 5 missing school one day a week
3. 1 2 3 4 5 missing school two or more days a week
4. 1 2 3 4 5 taking drugs occasionally
5. 1 2 3 4 5 drinking alcohol occasionally
6. 1 2 3 4 5 being a poor reader
7. 1 2 3 4 5 being on welfare
8. 1 2 3 4 5 being poor
9. 1 2 3 4 5 having parents who are divorced
10. 1 2 3 4 5 flunking one class each semester
11. 1 2 3 4 5 getting into trouble with the law
12. 1 2 3 4 5 disliking school
13. 1 2 3 4 5 being suspended from school
14. 1 2 3 4 5 being Black
15. 1 2 3 4 5 being Hispanic
16. 1 2 3 4 5 being Asian
17. 1 2 3 4 5 not speaking English well
18. 1 2 3 4 5 finding school to be difficult
19. 1 2 3 4 5 being truant regularly
20. 1 2 3 4 5 not reading well

Preliminary Development of a Screening Instrument for Learning Disabilities in Secondary Language Classes

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In recent years many states, including South Carolina and Georgia, have put into effect the requirement that a student have at least two years of the same foreign language in high school in order to be accepted into a state college or university. No longer do only the intellectually elite fill the rosters of foreign language classes. Instructional goals and objectives must be expanded in order to reach a broader population of students, who bring with them to the classroom a wide variety of learning styles and rates.

Before instructional and curricular adaptations can be made for a wider range of student capabilities, some methods must be devised to identify those students with perceptual learning disabilities, who may have difficulty learning a foreign language by conventional methods of instruction. Results from the most sophisticated aptitude tests currently available are not enough to form the basis for deciding which students should be enrolled in foreign language courses. In addition, such tests are too expensive to be administered on a wide-scale basis and require far more time than most principals would agree to spend. I.Q. tests show only a .40 correlation with actual foreign language achievement (Pimsleur, 1966). Neither grades in English nor teacher opinion is valid as a basis for decision.

Cloer (1985) reported on research to determine whether the visual and auditory perceptual skills of college students as measured by a short informal screening instrument were significantly related to foreign language achievement at the college level. He found that in German, Spanish, and Latin, the screening instrument correlated more highly with grades in language achievement than any of the other predictors, including SAT verbal, math, and total scores, predicted-grade-point-averages, and years in school spent studying a foreign language.

Section 504 of the Vocation Rehabilitation Act protects students in college with perceptual learning disabilities just as law 94-142 protects students in public schools with learning disabilities. The issue of learning disabilities is a most controversial area when referring to its relationship with the reading and spelling of English (Karlin, 1987).

Heretofore, little or nothing has been reported at ARF sessions about the problems learning disabled students encounter when they are asked to learn to read and spell in a foreign language. For several years at Furman, Cloer has investigated how visual and auditory perceptual disabilities normally cause problems in the reading and spelling of English at the college level and how these same perceptual problems affect learning in foreign language classes. Indeed, it appears that in foreign language classes the perceptually disabled student is asked to learn to read and spell again, but this time without the listening base that was so helpful in learning to read English!

Related Research

The objective of the current study was to determine if the screening instrument might be appropriate for students in grades 9-12 who must take foreign language courses to get into a state college. Will the screening instrument significantly predict semester grades and pinpoint perceptually disabled secondary students? Are the visual and auditory perceptual skills as measured by the short screening instrument significantly related to foreign language achievement at the secondary level? The study utilized eight high schools, 20 teachers of foreign language classes, and a total of 846 students.

Barrett (1965), Vernon (1973), and Durrell (1963) have well documented the need for accurate perception of letters and words in reading achievement. Dykstra (1966), Durrell and Murphy (1953), and Morency (1968) have also demonstrated the high correlation between auditory discrimination abilities and reading achievement. Durrell and Murphy (1953) have maintained that hearing sounds in spoken words is crucial to reading achievement. The question remains, however, what the role of perception is in a secondary foreign language class. Pimsleur (1966) demonstrated that the ability to use letter/sound association was significantly related to foreign language achievement.

Cloer (1979) attempted to analyze seven different high-frequency vocabulary lists to ascertain which spellings of English phonemes were most frequent. The study was done in an attempt to determine which sound/symbol relationships would most frequently help students in decoding words unfamiliar to them. Cloer (1983) attempted to analyze the 500 most frequently occurring multisyllabic words in order to determine which visual patterns appeared most frequently and which visual syllabication rules could assist pronunciation of the words. These findings were used in the construction of the instrument.

For example, Cloer found after analyzing 16,027 most frequently occurring words of English that the letter "i" in a closed syllable as in "sit" ranked highest in frequency. Thus, "i" in a closed syllable was the first item on the test. The hypothesis was that if letter/sound association holds importance, difficulty with the most frequent patterns should be predictive. Cloer also analyzed the 500 most frequently occurring multisyllabic words to determine which syllabication patterns were most frequent. He found that two consonants between two vowels as in "funny" or winter" was the most common. This type of frequency study served as the foundation of the test.

Method

Participants

Eighteen secondary teachers of French, Latin, and Spanish from eight different high schools participated. There were 402 students studying Spanish, 354 students studying French, and 90 students enrolled in Latin.

Of the eight high schools represented in the study, two are located in more affluent, northeast area of the county, and three are located in the less affluent, southwest and northwest areas. The other three are located in and serve students from a variety of economic and social backgrounds. Students representing virtually all levels of socioeconomic well-being took part in the test. Differences in means of test scores among the schools do not necessarily reflect the quality of the schools but are closely linked to pupils' home life and social and economic status. The scores were totaled and analyzed for each subtest separately and also combined for a total score. Norms for the test were established in each of three languages.

Screening Instrument

The test used in this study consists of two subtests, one visual and one auditory, which are combined for a total score. Copies of the complete tests are included at the end of this article. The visual test comprises 20 nonsense or stimulus words, each of which the students study for three seconds and then try to write from memory. The words, which increase in length as the test progresses, are similar to English words and contain some of the syllable sequences that seem to be troublesome for students with visual perceptual problems. The nonsense words, written in black in standard print, are shown on standard white typing paper, and the tallest letters are two inches high. In a classroom situation, the teacher stands where the students can see the words as they each are held up for three seconds. After viewing for three seconds, students write the words on an answer sheet.

The auditory test also has twenty nonsense words, which the students must pronounce silently. They then must underline an English word which has the same vowel sound as the nonsense word. It was hypothesized that using nonsense words to pronounce in the auditory test would evaluate to some degree the ability to use letter/sound association. Then matching the vowel sound of the stimulus word to the vowel sounds of one of the distractors would evaluate auditory discrimination and the ability to hear sounds in spoken words. The distractors primarily involve vowel sequences that are phonetically irregular. This shifts the emphasis to auditory discrimination.

Procedures

Several secondary teachers were asked to help in this study by administering the informal test to their students and then sending numerical semester averages to the analyst. The teachers were chosen because of their situations in high schools representing a variety of economic backgrounds in Greenville County. Twenty colleagues were asked to help; all but two returned the requested semester averages.

At the end of the first semester of study, the scores on the screening instrument were compared to the students' numerical semester averages. A standard grading scale is used in Greenville County, with interval ratios for grades of A (94-100), B (87-93), C (77-86), D (70-76), and F (below 70).

Pearson product moment correlation coefficients were computed between the informal aptitude test and students' end-of-first-term averages.

Results

The data were analyzed three basic ways, the three subsections that follow reflecting these analyses. First, the data were analyzed in relation to the different languages: Spanish, French, and Latin. Significant differences could exist in specific languages as to the relationship with the perceptual tests. The data were then analyzed by schools. There were differences, of course, between these schools in terms of size, physical facilities, administrative organization, teacher support, parent involvement, attendance, etc. Finally, since teacher difference has long been a concern in educational research, the correlation coefficients were computed by teacher identification in the third subsection.

Results by Languages

In Spanish, the Pearson correlation between the informal perceptual Total test score and grades was significant, $r (400) = .33$, $p < .001$. This accounts for 10.89% of the variance. The correlation between the Visual and Auditory subtests and grades in Spanish were also significant, with $p. < 001$. Table 1 gives the means, standard deviations for the screening tests, and correlations between the screening test and grades in Spanish classes.

Table 1

Correlation Between Screening Test and spanish Grades N = 402

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson Product-Moment Correlation
Visual Test	16.029	3.24	.21 p < .001
Auditory Test	14.007	3.72	.28 p < .001
Total Test	30.03	5.28	.33 p < .001

Table 2 gives the correlation between the screening test and grades in French. Both subtests and total score were significantly related to the students' grades, with the Total score accounting for almost 20 percent of the variance.

Table 2

Correlation Between Screening Test and French Grades N = 354

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson Product-Moment Correlation
Visual Test	15.497	3.37	.32 p <.001
Auditory Test	14.073	3.49	.39 p <.001
Total Test	29.573	5.62	.44 p <.001

Table 3 gives the means, standard deviations for the screening test, and correlations between the perceptual tests and grades in Latin classes. All correlations were significant, p. <.01. The correlation between the Total test and grades, r (88) = .41, p. <.001, accounted for 16.9% of the variance. It is not surprising that these perceptual tasks account for less than half of the variance. It is surprising, however, that they account for as much of the variance as they do.

Table 3

Correlation Between Screening Test and Latin Grades N = 90

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson Product-Moment Correlation
Visual Test	16.966	2.50	.32 p <.002
Auditory Test	15.3556	3.57	.34 p <.001
Total Test	32.32	4.94	.41 p <.001

Results by Schools

Table 4 gives the means, standard deviations, and correlations between the semester grades and the Total score of the eight different high schools on the perceptual screening test. Notice that the significant correlations range from .30 to .59 and that all but one are significant, with p. <.001. The one school without a significant correlation had only 28 subjects in the sample. These wide-ranging correlations, accounting for 9.4 percent to 35 percent of the variance, do show that differences exist among schools as to the power of the instrument to predict grades.

Table 4

Correlations Between Semester Average and Total Score for Subsamples Selected by Schools

		Semester Average Grades		Total Score			
Sch	Cases	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	r	p
2	47	85.82	7.49	27.80	6.44	.5919	.0001
6	123	87.86	7.80	31.56	5.07	.5725	.0000
1	116	88.68	8.44	29.02	5.79	.4889	.0000
8	113	82.76	9.60	30.56	5.21	.4259	.0000
7	70	82.78	10.69	31.25	4.60	.4085	.0007
5	174	84.64	9.98	30.54	5.18	.3696	.0000
3	175	84.33	10.01	29.22	5.55	.3070	.0001
4	28	82.53	11.64	29.50	5.01	.2553	.1870

Results by Teachers

In order to try to gain insight into the importance of teacher effect, correlation coefficients were computed by teacher identification. Table 5 shows that correlations for certain teachers are notably higher than those for others. Although the highest correlation, .62, occurred for a Spanish teacher, the range of correlations for Spanish is wider (from .2636 to .6212) than for either of the other two languages. The correlations for French teachers are generally higher than for either of the other two languages.

Table 5

Correlations Between Semester Average and Total Score for Subsamples Selected by Teachers

Sch #	Teach #	N=	Semester Average Grades Mean	Semester Average Grades S.D.	Total Score Mean	Total Score S.D.	r	p
French:								
1	9	52	88.90	7.64	29.55	5.37	.6089	.0000
2	2	47	85.82	7.49	27.80	6.44	.5919	.0001
4	15	11	81.90	10.09	33.54	3.07	.5650	.0679
5	7	49	85.44	8.80	30.79	4.79	.4312	.0023
5	3	68	85.86	8.91	30.60	5.58	.4277	.0005
3	5	82	84.62	9.75	26.91	5.30	.3947	.0005
6	18	45	88.68	7.30	32.42	4.26	.3619	.0139
Latin:								
6	17	48	90.20	6.39	32.91	4.23	.5158	.0004
8	13	42	87.57	6.23	31.64	5.62	.2994	.0513
Spanish:								
6	10	30	82.86	8.54	28.13	5.94	.6212	.0005
8	16	31	78.83	9.59	30.06	5.65	.5675	.0012
1	6	64	88.50	9.10	28.59	6.12	.4173	.0009
7	4	70	82.78	10.69	31.25	4.60	.4085	.0007
8	11	40	80.75	9.21	29.82	4.28	.3724	.0170
4	8	17	82.94	12.83	26.88	4.24	.3134	.2188
3	14	47	82.38	9.76	30.27	4.65	.2955	.0412
5	12	57	82.50	11.80	30.26	5.10	.2857	.0294
3	1	46	85.80	10.61	32.26	5.10	.2636	.0732

Note: Sch # = School number

Teach # = Teacher number

Reliability

Spearman-Brown reliability coefficients were obtained by school. The standard procedure for calculating split-half reliability, correlation of raw scores on odd versus even items, was used. The resulting split-half correlations were corrected for half-test length by the Spearman-Brown formula. Table 6 gives the Spearman-Brown coefficients of internal consistency. These coefficients reflect measurement error resulting from characteristics of the particular sample of items used in the test. It can be seen in Table 6 that six of eight coefficients for the total test are in the eighties. The one coefficient for school three seems to be a fluke. The other coefficients are much stronger. Further analysis of the data reveals in Table 5 that school number three had two teachers of spanish with very low correlations between grades and the perceptual test.

Table 6

Split-Half Reliability Coefficients for Visual and Auditory Subtests and Total Scores, Schools 1-8

School		Visual	Auditory	Total
1	(N = 116)	.77	.80	.87
2	(N = 47)	.77	.86	.88
3	(N = 175)	.42	.73	.51
4	(N = 28)	.81	.88	.85
5	(N = 174)	.77	.82	.80
6	(N = 123)	.82	.82	.86
7	(N = 70)	.74	.71	.77
8	(N = 113)	.78	.74	.81

Discussion

There are several conclusions to be drawn from this study. Scores on the informal perceptual tests for visual and auditory perception can account for a statistically significant, non-trivial proportion of the student's grade performance in his or her first-year language course at the end of the first semester of study.

The tests used for this study were specifically designed to measure visual and auditory perceptual functioning in the very early stages of information processing. By the time students reach secondary school, one would expect automaticity to have developed fully in these areas. Thus, any valid test of perceptual functioning should not account for most of the variance in the students' language achievement. Higher levels of information processing, as discussed in the whole language literature, should take priority.

These data suggest that before the psycholinguistic guessing game of reading can take place in a non-native language, these simple perceptual tasks may currently play an important role, especially for students with weak perceptual processing.

Without the listening base for the language, these perceptual tasks seem to take on added importance. Thus, a perceptually handicapped student cannot rely on the primary whole-language cue systems of syntax and semantic predictability and seems instead to rely more on the surface features of text in the typical foreign language classroom.

If this hypothesis is true, a valid test that identifies a student who has difficulty hearing sounds in words or a student who has problems in visual short-term memory will show a strong relationship to language achievement. This seems especially true in that predictability as discussed in the current literature on whole language seems almost totally absent in most foreign language classes.

The tests seem to identify perceptual difficulties better for students in French and Latin courses than for students in Spanish courses. However, the difference between the correlations for the different languages and the perceptual test is not striking. The correlations range from .33 to .44 on the total test. The difference among schools and teachers is more striking. They range from .25 to .59 for schools and .26 to .60 for teachers. This difference could relate to the manner in which studying of the language takes place. If the study focuses more on the auditory aspects, students with strengths in auditory processing will score higher on tests and make better grades. If the teacher focuses on spelling the new language (for which a listening base may not be present in the student), students with strengths in visual memory for words will get better grades. If foreign-language teachers focus on neither of these as primary emphasis in their teaching, less relationship will be seen between simple perceptual tasks and grades.

Classroom Implications and Suggestions for Future Studies

It is hypothesized that this test predicts performance because of the close similarity of the construct measured to the actual teaching that currently takes place. Perceptual problems among students will become problems in language achievement if perception is given emphasis.

The new whole-language literature may have powerful implications for foreign language classes. If greater emphasis is placed on higher levels of information processing, whereby teachers focus more on predictability and meaning, perceptual dysfunctioning could become less problematic. If predictable texts help so much in learning to read English, it seems safe to hypothesize that they would help even more in foreign language classes. If the reading and writing of real texts for real reasons under real conditions help in learning to read and write English, this seems even more germane for another language.

It is highly possible that we have some students who have trouble with these language classes for many different reasons, and adjusted instructional techniques referenced to the auditory or visual modalities may not make any great difference longitudinally. The focus on development of context in the instructional process may better meet their needs.

More research is necessary to establish the relationship between these perceptual tasks and English grades. One paramount difference would make this kind of research interesting. Students in English have a listening base, a contextual base on which they rely, especially if they have perceptual problems. Students with auditory or visual perceptual problems in a French class have no such base.

Of the students tested who scored more than two standard deviations below the mean on the perceptual test, more than half were likely to have difficulty (i.e., realize grades below C) in their language studies. Of the 31 students who realized a Total score on the test of 19 or lower, 16 actually made a semester grade in the D or F range (i.e., below 78). Of the other 15, 11 had five or more points difference between the two parts of the test, implying that they may have either a visual or an auditory difficulty, but probably not both.

More research is necessary to understand the perceptual functioning of subjects whose grades fall in the bottom quartile relative to those whose grades are in the top quartile. Will these students continue to show a significant difference on perceptual tasks?

It is also unclear at this point how experience with another language interacts with perception. It is possible that students who have been in foreign language classes for varying numbers of years will vary in perceptual functioning as a result of the experience itself. Only further research will answer questions about this interaction. The informal test used in this study can provide information that might be used in such research. Since the test is inexpensive and takes only a few minutes to administer and score, it can be readily available for widespread use among high school students and teachers. Members of ARF and other organizations are encouraged to use the instrument and to share the results. The globalization of business and industry causes such questions about learning another language to take on added significance for the 21st century.

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Visual Test

Directions: The teacher will show you cards on which nonsense words are printed. Study each word until the teacher removes the card. Then write as much of the nonsense word as you remember. Each card will be shown for three (3) seconds. Please do not begin to write until the card is removed. The cards cannot be shown a second time.

1. folet
2. fasel
3. grelei
4. scofle
5. liffeg
6. pafhups
7. smomter
8. smontir
9. dinonast
10. doponas
11. thiolary
12. choilery
13. mibedatte
14. chiffopot
15. pirnochlan
16. tenisilext
17. tibosolixt
18. pimosuffes
19. bidepiguen
20. etroborroy

Auditory Test

Instructions: Each incomplete statement below is followed by four (4) answers. You are to choose the one that best completes the statement. Notice that the stimulus words are nonsense words. Pronounce them phonetically to complete the statements.

TIME: 4 minutes

1. The underlined vowel sound in flif has the same sound as the "i" in

   (a) mirror (b) view (c) light (d) fir

2. The underlined vowel sound in tib has the same sound as the "i" in

   (a) thief (b) alive (c) give (d) first

3. The underlined vowel sound in nitfo has the same sound as the "i" in

   (a) high (b) build (c) biking (d) suite

4. The underlined vowel sound in speg has the same sound as the "e" in

   (a) key (b) head (c) bead (d) here

5. The underlined vowel sound in meb has the same sound as the "e" in

   (a) heifer (b) ceiling (c) earth (d) heed

6. The underlined vowel sound in af has the same sound as the "a" in

   (a) Claus (b) laugh (c) mate (d) father

7. The underlined vowel sound in taf has the same sound as the "a" in

   (a) arrow (b) base (c) calm (d) heart

8. The underlined vowel sound in gud has the same sound as the "u" in

   (a) full (b) rule (c) use (d) trouble

9. The underlined vowel sound in uf' tin has the same sound as the "u" in

   (a) rough (b) should (c) cue (d) flu

10. The underlined vowel should in og′ nuf has the same sound as the "o" in

(a) booth (b) owl (c) solemn (d) go

11. The underlined vowel sound in merting has the same "er" sound as

(a) there (b) earth (c) here (d) era

12. The underlined vowel sound in lo′ muf has the same sound as the "o" in

(a) yeomen (b) cover (c) oven (d) conscience

13. The underlined vowel sound in fe′ munt has the same sound as the "e" in

(a) end (b) people (c) heifer (d) leopard

14. The underlined vowel sound in pog′ ty has the same sound as the "y" in

(a) any (b) yellow (c) myth (d) cry

15. The underlined vowel sound in snafe has the same sound as the "a" in

(a) raking (b) chapping (c) chalking (d) father

16. The underlined vowel sound in shorf′ ning has the same sound as the "or" in

(a) doctor (b) world (c) Ford (d) words

17. The underlined vowel sound in sneef′ er tol has the same sound as the "e" in

(a) been (b) key (c) err (d) scent

18. The underlined vowel sound in bean has the same sound as the "e" in

(a) bread (b) check (c) breaking (d) tea

19. The underlined vowel sound in bar′ for ling has the same sound as the "ar" in

(a) caring (b) bartender (c) caretaker (d) arrive

20. The underlined vowel sound in bif′ get′ gub has the same sound as the "i" in

(a) grieve (b) shirt (c) hiking (d) whip

A Response to Jennings et al., and Cloer and Stanford

Joan L. Williams

The contributors to this session focused their professional talents on students with special problems—students considered/labeled "at risk" or "learning disabled"—and on specific concerns in affording them appropriate help in the schools. Both the Cloer and Stanford study and the study by Jennings et al. concentrated on secondary students. The presenters are to be commended on their shared concern for students with special needs.

Jennings et al., and Cloer, while concerned about the learning disabled and/or at risk student, concentrated their efforts in studies conducted with secondary students and teachers. The importance of limited visual and auditory perceptual skills or abilities as impairments in learning to read was recognized by Cloer who has constructed a simple screening tes ("Screening Instrument for Learning Disabilities") to assess such skills or abilities of students in a short period of testing. He expressed concern that these students with limited visual and auditory perceptual skills will have difficulty in learning to read English or in a foreign language (Spanish, French, Latin) class.

While regional in location, the study included a worthy number of students. Eight high schools, 18 teachers, 402 Spanish students, 354 French students, and 90 Latin students took part in the study. Cloer stated:

> Of the 31 students who realized a total score on the test of 19 or lower, 16 actually made a semester grade in the D or F range (i.e., below 78). Of the other 15, 11 had five or more

> points difference between the two parts of the test, implying that they may have either a visual or an auditory difficulty, but probably not both.

This finding points to the practical nature of the screening instrument.

While recognizing the potential value of this instrument as well as the time and effort of its author, a question came to mind about the auditory portion of the test. Students must read the test (of carefully prepared nonsense words) silently and make the necessary adjustments, relationships of indicated sounds. Could there be students taking the test who would be unable to read the nonsense words correctly, therefore could arrive at an incorrect vowel match? The test answer could be incorrect not because of faulty auditory perceptual skill but because of faulty interpretation of the visual cue. One opinion is that although this may not detract at all from the potential value of the test; it is a consideration.

A comparison of the students' first semester averages with their test scores pointed to the importance of the auditory-visual components in the courses. In attempting to look at teacher effect, the author noted that class test scores/semester grade scores correlations for some of the eighteen teachers in the study were much higher than for others. Knowing the principal methods, strategies, or emphasis of instruction from teacher to teacher could be illuminating as related to this finding. Perhaps some strategies in use in certain classes rely less on auditory-visual skills than do those strategies employed by other teachers.

The Jennings et al., paper concerned at risk students. Hayes (1986), at an earlier FORUM, stated that there are ". . . factors (which) are generally overlooked in mainstream reading theory and contribute greatly to an individual's chronic condition of being a 'remedial reader.' These factors are combinations of anxiety, attributions, maladaptive strategies, inaccurate or nonexisting concepts about aspects of reading, and goals and motivation." Rubenstein (1989) indicated that middle school students need to develop a feeling of self worth and success as people as well as students. In this vein, Jennings et al., have acknowledge a current educational problem of providing most effective programs for at risk high school students. Recognizing that traditionally remedial programs may not give appropriate consideration to affective aspects of a student's program or needs, the authors asked students and teachers to respond to certain open-ended questions as to what "at risk" meant to them, what are causes of this condition, and what could/should be done for and by at risk students to correct their situation. This study provided helpful first-hand information from teachers and students as to how they view the at risk problem and what programs should include.

In summary, each of the studies reported in this session has made a positive and practical contribution to the field of education. More has been learned about planning programs for the at risk student, for learning more about students with auditory-visual perceptual skills problems and some ideas about how to help identify them in foreign language classes. The major value of these papers, in my opinion, has come from the interest of the authors in viewing students as individuals with a need for programs geared to the student and in searching for ways to improve children's opportunities for success and learning in school—to be successful and to *feel* successful.

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Facilitating Change to Attain Educational Excellence

Jack P. Helfedt

In recent years, policymakers have become increasingly active in educational matters. Concurrent with the policymakers' increased activism on educational issues, educational researchers have been generating and reporting new knowledge that should lead to important changes in instruction. Yet classroom observational studies indicate that practice hasn't changed much over the last decade. Why, despite the augmented efforts of policymakers and researchers, is it "business as usual" in today's classrooms? This article seeks to provide some insights to help answer this question. Further, some of the ideas might serve as a catalyst to promote understanding and acceptance among those interested in educational excellence.

Communication Must Improve

At the expense of restating the obvious, policymakers and practitioners ignore the research and each other (Hall & Loucks, 1982). Little empirical evidence supports or refutes the numerous federal, state, and local mandates that are designed to impact on classroom practices (Hall, 1985). Where policies are reportedly based on empiricism, the research is often misunderstood, policymakers frequently misinterpreting and overgeneralizing the results of single-factor process product research in their quest for instant and universal solutions to multi-faceted educational concerns. A prime example is the misuse of correlational data relating a single variable such as time on task to increased achievement as the rationale for lengthening the school day or extending the school year.

Policymakers have persisted in prescribing narrow, politically expedient solutions to complex educational propositions, perhaps because of their limited experiences in education. While most policymakers' actions are well intended, they mandate resources, organizations, and rules based on their [illegible]ptions of how schools should be rather than on the real world of today's classrooms (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988). The fact is, the vast majority of political policymakers were never members of the education profession [illegible] further, the few that were educators were usually in the classroom briefly and long ago. Because policymakers are basically unaware how teaching [illegible] learning occur in contemporary schools, they are oblivious to, or choose [illegible] ignore, the time required to accommodate, adjust, and adapt practice to their decrees, even the seemingly legitimate ones. In deference to policymakers, however, many of their initiatives have originated in the absence of proactive policy efforts from educators.

Education Is Politics

Educators in general, and teacher educators in particular, are politically naive and complacent. Educators need to understand that education *is* politics (Corrigan, 1985), even if most of the political action is being accomplished without input from educators (Duckworth, 1984). In recent years, various states have enacted, or at[illegible] threatened to pass, legislation that would drastically limit the number of credit hours of professional education courses that could be included in teacher preparation programs. Most of these proposals have been submitted by politically appointed "blue ribbon" committees or panels that did not include a single teacher educator (Hall, 1985). Incidentally, educators were not invited to President Bush's "Education Summit" held recently in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Frequently, it appears that the demands for accountability and other educationally related actions of policymakers reflect a distrust, or at least a misunderstanding, of educational practitioners. As a consequence of these types of actions, teachers have become deeply concerned over their loss of status, the increased bureaucratic pressure they experience, their negative public image, and the lack of recognition and rewards (Boyer, 1983). While it is convenient to blame policymakers for the erosion of teacher credibility and respect and to cast politicians in the role of the self-righteous villains, educators must take at least partial blame for their current status.

Policymakers might have taken the lead in mandating accountability and higher standards in the absence of proactive initiatives from teacher educators, researchers, and practitioners. Educators need to stop laying blame and try to understand that, with respect to educational issues, policymakers are essentially under-informed, well-intentioned individuals.

Teacher educators must generate plans for communicating with policymakers. Basic trust and understanding between the two groups must be established. Teacher educators need to share some basic information about the way educational change is accomplished. Further, they must convince policymakers that they are competent professionals. In exchange for the support of policymakers, teacher educators must affirm their commitments toward excellence, propose exciting, yet viable, program initiatives, and be willing to accept the primary responsibilities for improving the education of teachers.

Applying the Findings of Change Research

Information is available sufficient to convince policymakers, researchers, and practitioners regarding what works and what doesn't work when it comes to effecting changes in programs and performances. The literature on change processes strongly suggests that change requires support, trust, and adaptation rather than inflexible mandates that imply distrust (Richardson-Koehler, 1987). In addition, if mandates have any effect at all, they tend to be temporary, narrow fixes rather than longer lasting process solutions designed to influence the multivariate, context specific nature of schooling (Hall, 1985).

While the top-down approach to change may work in commercial, production-line situations, ample evidence reveals that this orientation to the change process is ineffective in educational settings. Educational leaders must convince policymakers that the educational system is not something merely to gain control of. Further, it cannot be assumed that issuing prescriptions and closely monitoring behaviors of subordinates results in uniformly high quality teaching.

Top-down mandates usually meet with varying degrees of opposition, of three types outlined by Richardson-Koehler (1987). The first tactic, known as passive resistance, is usually manifested as "procedural display." Here the individual appears to comply through selected token behaviors, but spends most time and effort in a usually pre-mandated manner of operation. A second response to mandates can be characterized as "making a silk purse out of a sow's ear," or "making the best of a bad situation." This may be dangerous because it is often accompanied by complacency and may well impede any *real* changes. A third reaction to policy mandates can be termed the martial arts approach. Typically, the goals of a prescribed policy are accepted, but the means of achieving these goals are overtly attacked. In addition to the attacks on the bases for a policy, the individuals targeted by the edict usually get busy suggesting alternative means to the same ends.

Once policymakers are convinced that the top-down mandates do not work, researchers and practitioners must simultaneously collaborate, become proactive regarding educational reform, and effectively communicate some of the basic tenets or conditions associated with successful attempts at facilitating real changes and improvements in educational programs. The crucial element needed for change is time. Educators must get policymakers to realize that developing and implementing worthwhile policies requires more time than the two- to four-year terms of elected policymakers.

In reporting a case study of a policy for reading reform in the Michigan State Department of Education, Weber (1988) noted program development and change strategies requiring more than seven years from the planning and development stages through the implementation stage. In the literature on change, time requirements seem the rule rather than the exception. Another example, the AAAS Project 2061 (1989), a three-phase initiative for improving science education, has been slated to have an impact on schools in 15 to 20 years.

Time is essential because differences in teacher behavior or performance require changes in attitude, values, and basic belief systems, and such changes do not occur overnight. These fundamental changes are not integrated by teachers merely through the acquisition of new knowledge. Instruction won't change merely because "research says" or "according to the literature" a particular practice is effective. While knowledge of the latest research reports may be important, this will do little to change the nature of teaching and learning in classrooms (Elmore, 1988; Hall, 1987; Richardson-Koehler, 1987; Schlecty, 1985). In order to respond in a professional, authentic manner, even to a proposal for reform based on the best theoretical and empirical knowledge available, practitioners must have time to assess their value systems and change some basic assumptions about the way their professional lives work.

Educators cannot afford to disregard what is known about the change process and the way changes evolve. Elmore and McLaughlin (1988) reported a three-stage paradigm reflecting the change process: survival, consolidation, and mastery. The survival stage is permeated by uncertainty about the why and hows of the new procedure. Performance of the procedure is typically minimal and will probably cease altogether unless the individual targeted for change receives support. The change agent needs to persuade that the new practice makes for better teaching. The change agent will also need to provide systematic feedback and allow time for reflection and interaction. During the consolidation stage the new performance must be integrated with traditional practice. The change agent must insure safe rehearsal opportunities and reinforce an understanding of the conceptual base of the change. Administrative support and interest is also crucial. The focus of the mastery stage is the adaptation and application of the change in diverse and changing contexts.

Another major factor that must be understood by policymakers, researchers, and teacher educators is that variability in the ways of responding to policy standards should be encouraged rather than punished. Policies aimed at reducing implementation variability by reducing teacher discretion not only reflect the lack of necessary trust that individuals will make an authentic commitment to the policy but preclude learning from situational adaptation to policy goals. Such policies may also impede effective instruction because mere compliance to mandates drastically reduces discretion (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988). On the other hand, understanding variability aids learning from context-specific experiences.

Another result of allowing varied implementation of policies is that judgment and expertise can prevail over rules and regulations. Unfortunately, in the real world of education the reverse relationship appears, all too often, to be true. The notable absence of educators' perspectives in many recent reform initiatives (Duckworth, 1984) strongly implies that rules take precedence over professional judgments.

The study and reform of education is essentially the study and reform of what teachers do. Accordingly, if policy is going to influence students' lives in the classroom, it must directly involve teachers and what they do, how they do it, and why they do it. Not directly involving teachers in reform efforts strongly implies that educators are a type of public servant to be "trained" by those who know better how to carry out a job as they are directed to do, to be assessed managerially, and to be understood through third-party studies. When the status of teachers is improved and teachers are treated as professional decision makers instead of the executors of someone else's orders, judgment will dominate and the necessary reform in education will be more achievable. Corrigan (1985) postulated that funding and support for teacher education will also improve in proportion to the elevation of teachers' status in society. One strong indication of the rising status of teachers will occur when policy is used less to mandate resource allocations, structures, and rules and more to initiate development. It will mean charging people who work in real schools to help fashion workable solutions to real problems and allowing those proposed solutions the opportunity and time to fail or succeed (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988).

Research and experience point out how to create effective educational programs, but that knowledge is useless unless it is translated into the experience of practitioners. That translation requires development and change within schools and classrooms, change that requires time, accommodation and tolerance for mistakes.

For this translation to occur, researchers need to broaden the scope and nature of their research efforts. Beyond convergent, process product research based on brief scripted episodes of training and learner responses to two or three paragraphs of text, attention needs to be focused on longer periods of instruction and larger units of text (Porter & Brophy, 1988; Zumwalt, 1982).

Research practices and findings need to be approached from a variety of perspectives. The results of process product studies need to be validated in real classroom situations by real teachers. Thus the constructs of researcher/teacher or teacher experts (Allen & Albert, 1987; McConaghy, 1986; Porter & Brophy, 1988) as collaborators with basic researchers need to be developed. Teachers will need to be prepared with a critical thinking "researcher" perspective. Further, these individuals must be provided with the time and support to experiment by manipulating and integrating instructional procedures. In this manner, we will cultivate the analytic, reflective practitioners needed to help make the many important instructional decisions required for effective instruction. Getting teachers—evolving from novice through competent toward expert stages—more involved in generating their own understanding of instructional principles can serve to energize teachers as well as enrich their applications of instructional strategies (McConaghy, 1986). The Contour Research Strategy (Hall & Loucks, 1982), with its stages of concern and levels of use, might be a useful paradigm to consider.

The attitude of the reflective practitioner/researcher/teacher needs to be instilled in *all* educators at all levels as they develop their expertise. Evaluating these characteristics is crucial to developing competent and expert teachers, because there are no universal teaching competencies (Brophy, 1982; Shulman, 1985) and there is no generalizable *prescriptive* theory of good teaching (Guba, 1975; Scriven, 1972). A serious problem has arisen in relation to these understandings about teaching in that some educators, who might be viewed as a bit naive or perhaps a little overzealous, have promised legislators too much in terms of a list of teacher competencies that can and should be validated.

Because of the unique context surrounding every teaching/learning situation, teachers will need to rely on integrating understanding derived from reflection on previous successes and failures. However, to perform in the fluid fashion associated with expert performances, teachers will need sufficient support, informative feedback, and practice to move beyond a competent mastery level to a more automatized level of performance.

Why does our society hold such high expectations for immediate and far-reaching reforms of education? This same society understands and even espouses the long-term developing of Olympic athletes in sports such as track and weight lifting, which are much less complex than teaching. Further, we pay homage to the athlete who dedicates years of his/her life to the intense training required to become a star performer in an athletic endeavor that boils down to a very brief performance of a few minutes. On the other hand, this same public, along with its policymakers, expects (almost demands) immediate expertise of a novice teacher. Perhaps policymakers and the public have these immediate, unrealistic expectations because too many teacher educators have them too. As Lanier (1984) pointed out, teacher education does frequently suffer from the illusion that great things can be accomplished with very little money in a very short time.

Conclusion

Obtaining educational excellence will require more than reacting to the pronouncements of researchers and policymakers. It will involve changing certain attitudes and values of educators, researchers, and policymakers at all levels. This is going to take time, commitment, and cooperation from individuals in each of these populations. When these basic changes begin to take place, the status of teachers in society will improve. When education is valued as it is in the cultures where children out perform American children, the status of teachers will rise. As Corrigan (1985) has pointed out, when teachers regain some of their lost status in society, the funding formulas and support for education in general, and teacher education in particular, will increase.

Educational improvement will involve invention and experimentation. It will involve a broad-scaled commitment from within the profession as well as a commitment from the policymakers. An important part of this commitment is to allow for diversity and even failure. The old adage "nothing ventured, nothing gained" is no less true for educational reform than for other revolutionary ideas. Where would the NASA program be without invention, commitment, and failure? To the extent that educational policy encourages and accommodates these factors, policymakers will get credit for success. To the extent that policy inhibits these factors, highly committed practitioners will quit, move on or up, or change career fields. Those teachers with less commitment and expertise will remain. Then educators will once again receive the blame for the failures of education.

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Evaluation of Literacy Training: As Viewed by Government Agencies, Educational Organizations, Business and Industry, and Literacy Providers

James Dinnan, L. Vern Pulling, Lea McGregor

Literacy programs have been around since the first settlers landed here. It is only in the last half of the eighties that major funding has started to become available to face the problems caused by a growing illiterate population. More extensive funding in the nineties is anticipated, but along with these support funds is a push for a concise reporting of their expenditures. Are we getting our money's worth? Accountability is crucial to acceptance or rejection of proposals at all levels of funding.

A major gap exists between the quantitative (numbers) outlook of many funders and the qualitative assessments often provided by the persons involved in the training. Strauss (1987) offers these observations:

> Among social scientists a distinction is commonly drawn between quantitative and qualitative research. . . Qualitative researchers tend to lay considerable emphasis on situational and often structural contexts, in contrast to many quantitative researchers, whose work is multivariate but often weak on context. (p. 2)

The need for flexibility in assessing literacy programs is also noted by Ulmer and Dinnan (1981):

> The evaluation model which follows suggests that evaluation is a process that extends to all the life roles of the adult student and, further, that the purpose of instruction is not only functional but also has application, in a sense, is to measure student achievement in terms of social, vocational, and personal gains in competence.

Federal and State government agencies usually provide a "request for proposal" with an outline of major items that will be checked when funding a given proposal. Among many items, a certain weight factor is provided for the evaluation section of the proposal. These data are usually expected to conform to the standard testing and statistical analysis procedures used for decades. To cite growth in self-esteem, social awareness, attitude change, or participation in a group activity as observations of human behavior is to court disaster in funding. Thus, the system of rewards reinforces using T-scores, analysis of variance, or multiple regression equation, when the data might reveal nothing about a person's relationship with his or her family or boss.

Educational institutions or private statistical companies are major sources relied upon by the funding agency for assessing data relative to growth or changes in behavior. These organizations are often called upon to help review proposals, set criteria, and recommend funding. Based upon past performance of evaluating new programs for funding, the numbers game is at the top of the list. Guidance for evaluating programs involving human behavior is sought not from the Sociology, Anthropology or Adult Education Departments but from the "Testing Bureau."

Business and Industry are by far the most involved in training and education for their employees. They look for outside help in organization, development, and evaluation of a program, but again, a cost-effective analysis must be presented if they are to be a viable part of an ever-changing growth pattern. The bottom line is production, cost effectiveness, and accountability. Measure production charts, measure absenteeism, measure accidents, measure, measure, measure; prove it with data.

Literacy providers, whether in group or individual programs, have not been part of the standard programs involved in the general distribution of funds but have been way out on the perimeter, begging for scraps—left-over books, rooms, personnel—and expected to self-fund by any means available. Evaluation has been required in "numbers," attendance, programs, "Test" growth, hours, participants, or any other number means they might provide.

Seldom have feelings, attitudes, informal assessments, or experience growth in class, at home, or at work been acceptable to a remote board of directors, supervisors, government, or foundation, when the essence of the change observed in an individual should be the epitome of success.

Thus, agencies that provide funding must be made aware that valid alternative methods exist for assessing the production of change in human behavior; that, ideally, some form of numerical data will be present but that the concept of qualitative analysis is equal to, and often superior to, statistical data, which is often meaningless to the reader.

Providers must declare how, when, where, and why qualitative analysis will be used and must provide training in the use of these techniques, along with the quantitative data. Funders must be willing to accept the results of these collected discussions, notes, observations, and interviews as a valid data base for present and future funding.

Maybe if Literacy training finally gets into the mainstream of funding, a new humanistic *view* (Lytle, et al., 1989) of a large number of people and the changes in their various group interactions will be considered a significant contribution to the greater society and we will recognize the human person behind the frozen number.

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Preschoolers Emerging Mental Models with Literacy

Marino C. Alvarez

Preschool children are able to express thoughts and feelings through language, and these expressions vary depending upon the development and experience of the child. The language of children reveals their understanding of how the world works and reflects a mental model of how they perceive the workings of the world (Donaldson, 1978; Garnham, 1987). A constructivist's view of knowledge making is based on the individual actively constructing the form and content of his or her own experience (Cofer, 1977). In this view, cognitive structures are not fixed, but vary with the development and experience of the individual. Children are constructing meaning when they try to relate an event/object to their everyday experience and world knowledge.

The focus of this article is to show how a child's conversation can be analyzed, using two different methods, to reveal the child's mental model of daily experiences and then to illustrate how one of these methods can be shared with the child to foster literacy. First, we discuss how mental models contribute to literacy development. Next, we demonstrate how mental models can be analyzed. Finally, we discuss how these analyses aid conceptual learning and foster literacy.

Thought and Language

Emergent literacy has garnered much attention in the field of reading within the past few years. Emergent literacy is that period in a child's reading and writing development that occurs prior to formal school instruction (Teale, 1987). Attention has focused on the role of literacy development in the home as well as in preschool programs. Researchers have reported a disparity between literacy development in the home and in preschool (see Juliebo, 1985; Tizard & Hughes, 1984). For example, preschool children are given many more opportunities to converse, share ideas, and ask questions at home than when attending a preschool (Hall, 1987). Where teacher talk and questions tend to dominate in-school experiences, teachers have an expectant answer in mind. To illustrate, Christopher (age 4) raised his hand to respond to a teacher's question and was called upon. After he gave his answer, the teacher stated: "That is correct," and proceeded to elaborate upon his answer. When she had finished, Christopher asked her: "If you already know the answer, why did you ask me?" This disparity in question/answer relationships is explained, in part, by the manner in which literacy development occurs in the home versus a school-type learning environment (see Chapman, 1986; Doak, 1986; Fagan, 1987; Goodman & Haussler, 1986). Spontaneity is a key ingredient that separates home from school learning. Children use language at home to express their thoughts and are concerned more with meaning rather than form. Home-type learning allows for knowledge responsive to the child's curiosity, interest, and a need to understand and communicate ideas to emerge from informal events. Authentic questions and problems are discussed and solved as the need arises. Conversely, structure, form, rules, and memorization tend to be associated with school-type learning. This occurs, in part, because teachers follow guides within published reading materials that contain answers corresponding to predetermined questions.

Being able to control one's thinking is the first step to awareness within the emergent learner. This self-awareness, according to Vygotsky (1986), is the ability of an individual to regulate his or her own thought processes by becoming conscious of his or her own thinking. According to Vygotsky, higher mental functions result from mediated activity that occurs through interpersonal and social relations. In this context, children who are emergent readers and writers negotiate and restructure meaning in terms of the people, events, and objects that they encounter in discussion, in stories read to them, or in real-life contexts. The degree to which these emergent learners can process new information depends upon their mental model (i.e., the organization of world knowledge based upon prior knowledge and experience).

Mental Models

Learning novel concepts requires the emergent learner to connect new information to a congruent mental model. Mental models represent a person's construal of existing knowledge and/or of new information even though this information may be fragmentary, inaccurate or inconsistent (Gentner & Gentner, 1983). A person's mental model is a representation of a particular belief based on existing knowledge of a physical system or a semantic representation depicted in a text. For example, a child may hold a belief that balls are round, inflatable and made to bounce. However, this child may encounter a football (an ellipsoid) that is kicked or thrown, or a bowling ball that is solid and has holes drilled into it for the purpose of rolling rather than bouncing. This new knowledge is integrated into a new, more complex, mental structure about the shape, substance, form, and function of balls.

Children's mental models help them to organize specific events, objects, and individuals according to their own immediate world of experience. For example, a preschool child has knowledge of Sesame Street, its characters (real and unreal), and the various events that take place over time. The more a child sees Bert and Ernie together, the more varied and elaborated his mental model becomes. A child's mental model includes a number of factors about Bert and Ernie's relationship (social, moral, ethical) and about how they react to situations involving other members of the cast. If a child is read books about Bert and Ernie (e.g., Ernie's Big Mess, Ernie's Little Lie, Bert's and the Broken Teapot, It's Not Fair), he or she may take these events and combine them into a category reference that becomes part of his or her mental model. The events portrayed in these stories may serve as reference points for the child, and the concepts of "fairness," "responsibility," and "honesty" act as markers a child can refer to in his or her own everyday experiences. To illustrate, if a child playing a board game is confronted with a circumstance that involves the concept of "fairness," he may opt to point out that he placed his marker on the wrong space and move it back rather than take unfair advantage of the other players. In this example (the playing of a board game), the child referred to his concept of fairness, which may have been prompted by the story "It's Not Fair."

Much can be learned about young children's thoughts and reasoning abilities (see Lipman, 1988; Lipman, Sharp, & Oscanyan, 1977; Mathews, 1980, 1984) from their conversations with other children and with adults. Visually representing these conversations is one way to explicate the ideas and organization of children's thoughts.

Analyzing a Child's Concepts

In several studies conducted with children, Anglin (1977) classified their conversations according to a hierarchical structure. Anglin uses three categories to analyze children's discussion of concepts: (1) super ordinates of the concept discussed; (2) subordinates of a given concept; and (3) properties of the instances of the concept.

Novak and Gowin (1984) report similar interview procedures using concept maps to represent thinking in a hierarchical format. A concept map is a visual representation of an individual's thought process. Novak (1990) defines a concept map as "a representation of meaning or ideational framework specific to a domain of knowledge, for a given context of meaning." Novak and Gowin also use superordinates and subordinates of a given concept from which properties are an inclusive trait of the concept being discussed. Properties are either subordinates or are compared or contrasted by cross-linkages. In their scheme, concept maps vary in their visual display according to an individual's arrangement.

A conversation with a four-year-old is presented as an example of how both of these methods can be used to reveal a preschool child's thought processes with a given topic. Probes were used to elicit more information from him.

A Conversation with a Four Year Old

Christopher (male, 4 years, 8 months)

Me: What do you know about dogs?

C: Well, they ruff and they eat dog food.
They eat bones and have sharp teeth.

Me: What is a dog?

C: It's an animal.

C: They stand up on their two legs.

Later:

Me: What is a dog?

C: A dog is an animal.

Me: What else?

C: Well, he an animal and animals turn into animals. And dogs can be named anybody. Like other people's names. Like dogs eat bones not like the dinosaurs. And dinosaurs don't eat stuff like that. And dinosaurs drink water like dogs. And, and dogs could see they have eyes like other people too. Dinosaurs have eyes too like dogs. But dogs and dinosaurs are different. They're a little the same, they are both animals, and different when they're both dinosaurs roar and the doggies ruff, bark, and dogs don't stand up like other people they stand up like this [gets on all fours].

Me: Like what?

C: On their feet like this.

Me: How many feet do they have?

C: Four [counts] one, two, three four.

Me: Yes.

C: And we have two like the Tyrannosaurus Rex cause he had two feet just like man.

Me: Is man an animal?

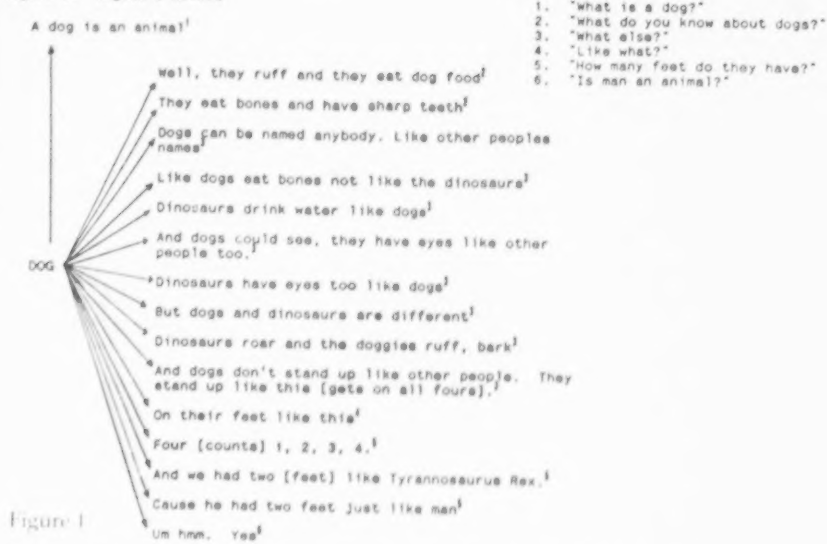
C: Un hmm. Yes.

The conversation with this child indicates that he knows that *dog* is a subordinate concept and can be categorized under *animal* (a superordinate concept). He knows that dogs eat *dog food* and *bones*, and that they have *sharp teeth*. He compares *dogs*, *dinosaurs*, and *man*. All three have eyes and therefore can see, and are *animals*. *Dogs* and *dinosaurs* also drink water. He contrasts *dogs* and *dinosaurs* by stating that dogs *ruff*, *bark*, while dinosaurs *roar*; and, that dogs stand [walk] on *four legs* while the Tyrannosaurus Rex stands [walks] on *two legs*. His comparison with dinosaurs indicates that he has a general knowledge of dinosaurs and a specific reference with the Tyrannosaurus Rex, which is different from the dinosaurs that walk on four legs and are plant-eaters. After a short interval, when he is again asked "What is a dog?" he reiterates the superordinate concept "animal" and is able to reflect and contribute more information to the additional probes.

Two visual displays are presented to show how children can reveal their mental models of thinking in a hierarchical structure. The first display represents this child's responses using Anglin's method; the second, Novak and Gowin's. Figure 1 uses Anglin's display with the superordinate concept above the concept dog (i.e., animal); and the properties of the concept to its right.

The superscripts correspond to the question number and the child's response. The responses are categorized as being either superordinate, properties, or subordinates. In this case, responses were classified as a superordinate with related properties.

Figure 1. Anglin's Method



A dog is an animal[1]

DOG

Well, they ruff and they eat dog food[2]

They eat bones and have sharp teeth[3]

Dogs can be named anybody. Like other peoples names[3]

Like dogs eat bones not like the dinosaurs[3]

Dinosaurs drink water like dogs[3]

And dogs could see, they have eyes like other people too.[3]

Dinosaurs have eyes too like dogs[3]

But dogs and dinosaurs are different[3]

Dinosaurs roar and the doggies ruff, bark[3]

And dogs don't stand up like other people. They stand up like this [gets on all fours].[3]

On their feet like this[4]

Four [counts] 1, 2, 3, 4.[5]

And we had two [feet] like Tyrannosaurus Rex.[5]

Cause he had two feet just like man[5]

Um hmm. Yes[6]

1. "What is a dog?"
2. "What do you know about dogs?"
3. "What else?"
4. "Like what?"
5. "How many feet do they have?"
6. "Is man an animal?"

Figure 1

Figure 2 is a concept map that represents a hierarchical representation in a different fashion. The broken lines on this map are cross-links that show how one part of the map is related to another. They also serve to illustrate comparison-and-contrast, such as that dogs and dinosaurs both drink water and have eyes, while dogs eat bones and dinosaurs do not eat bones.

[illegible]

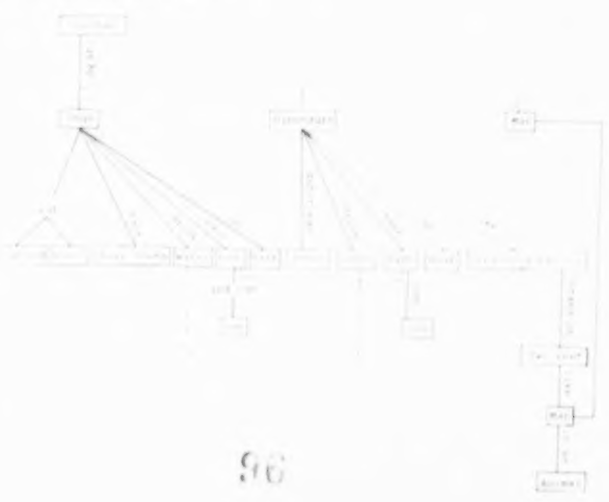


Figure 2

The concept map portrayed in Figure 2 can be used to show the child how ideas can be organized and that these ideas can be conveyed with words in order to share information and negotiate meanings. The map serves to reveal language and thought and provides information about a child's background knowledge and experience with an event or object. In so doing, the teacher (parent/guardian) can use this information visually displayed on the map to probe for other information, relating new ideas or clarifying misconceptions held by a child. For example, the child can be made aware that the Tyrannosaurus Rex was a meat eater and had sharp teeth, while most other dinosaurs did not have teeth and did not eat meat. While both methods classify a child's revelations with a topic, Novak and Gowin's (1984) concept mapping procedure seems to portray the information in a format that offers a child a clearer perspective from which to learn conceptual relations and develop literacy skills (see Alvarez, Risko, Waddell, Drake, & Patterson, 1988; Stice & Alvarez, 1987).

Concept maps can be used by the parent/guardian or teacher to show a preschool child how language and thought contribute to literacy development. The steps are as follows:

1. Decide upon a topic to be mapped. (Topics usually evolve from spontaneous inquiry or discussion.) This topic is written on a sheet of paper.
2. Ask the child to think of words that relate to the selected topic. Write each word on this sheet of paper.
3. Formulate subheadings that relate to the selected topic.
4. Ask the child to categorize the words under these subheadings. Offer assistance when needed.
5. Write the topic on the center of another paper, ask the child to select the subheadings, write them on the paper, and begin connecting each idea with a word or word phrase (e.g., such as, can be, that is, is, the, etc.).
6. Ask the child to relate other information to the words arranged on the map.
7. Ask the child to read the map. Provide assistance as needed. Ask the child questions during this process: Can information appearing on one part of the map be related to another area? If so, draw a broken line showing this connection. Which parts of the map are similar? Which are different? Review the map to clarify misconceptions, rethink, rearrange, or add other ideas that come to mind. If necessary, redraw the map, incorporating these revisions.

8. Write the ideas appearing on the map in paragraph form. Read the paragraph aloud or ask the child to read what he or she has developed. (This final stage is introduced when the child shows some proficiency in reading from the map.)

Hierarchical concept maps reveal ideas, facts, and supporting material by placing them at proper levels of rank thereby making the items meaningful. They enable children to see how information can be categorized and linked from one part of a map to another with cross linkages. Reading from the map is a meaningful and eventful process by which the child derives meaning from the depicted language. The concept mapping procedure becomes a self-initiated technique for the child's later development by acting as an instrument for mapping textbook passages that contain important facts and ideas for better comprehension and retention. This procedure can also be used for mapping ideas that can be shared with peers, a teacher, or a parent/guardian as when planning an oral presentation, writing a paper, or brainstorming. Writing skills are enhanced when the child is able to write a paragraph or more describing the conceptual arrangement of the ideas portrayed on the map. This is a relatively easy process, since the map is now organized into coherent and unified threads evolving from a focus or theme.

Implications and Conclusions

The thought and language processes of an emergent learner seem to be cultivated in homes where parents/guardians provide meaningful materials in the form of print and nonprint materials and make available writing tools to promote the exchange of written communication. Verbal and written communication based on spontaneity arising from authentic questions and problems leads to the restructuring and enrichment of a child's mental model.

Mental models also are influenced by reasoning and philosophizing. Being able to reason promotes reading and writing for meaningful learning, which in turn encourages thinking (Lipman, 1988; Lipman, Sharp & Oscanyan, 1977). Philosophizing is an attempt to resolve uncertainty through reasoning. It fosters the inquisitiveness and vivid imagination necessary for forming conceptual connections among events. Philosophy for the emergent learner becomes one of playful manipulation of concepts and their relatedness (Mathews, 1980, 1984). Philosophical discussion is a way for parents/guardians and teachers to sharpen a child's reasoning and inquiry skills. Inquiries resulting from these discussions can be portrayed visually in a hierarchical concept map. Together, the child and the parent/guardian or teacher develop a visual display of related ideas that can act as a springboard to negotiate meaning, clarify misconceptions, and foster literacy.

The language of the preschool child is developed by what they are told about a given event, and what they interpret based on experience. Constructions of interviews through Anglin's (1977) and Novak and Gowin's (1984) hierarchical concept maps can reveal children's emerging mental models. When these constructions of mental models are displayed on concept maps, these maps lend themselves to sharing ideas and clarifying misconceptions that arise in everyday curiosity. These maps establish a conceptual framework which these children can later use, during their formal school experience, to express and share their thoughts with others in a meaningful context that is much richer in specifics than general verbalization.

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Achieving Excellence in Reading: Where Do We Begin?

Beth S. Wise, Judy C. Shaver

Educators have known for many years that children do not benefit equally from formal instruction. Youngsters who lack language and basic concepts are apt to be unable to meet the expectations of the school. Evidence from research indicates that language-limited children are at risk of later academic difficulties and that these children can benefit from special assistance in language development during their early years (DeMauro, 1983; Illinois State Board of Education, 1985; Weiss, 1988).

For children whose first experiences with standard English begin at the kindergarten or first grade level, basic interpersonal communication skills may be acquired quickly. However, these skills are often insufficient for academic needs (Cummins, 1982; Saville-Troike, 1983).

The Illinois State Board of Education (1985) found that pre-kindergarten children from a limited-English background who were given the opportunity to learn basic concepts and language simultaneously generally developed adequate language skills to enable them to handle school tasks from grade three upward. Children with comparably limited English proficiency who did not receive preschool language intervention were likely to experience difficulty.

Theoretical Framework

The University of Colorado conducted a three-year project for three- to five-year-old, limited-English-proficient children. The program's design was based on the work of Piaget and the neurolinguistic work of

Lennenberg. Results of the program showed both immediate and long-term benefits, including improved language, cognitive, and social development, increased self-esteem, and improved readiness for school. Gains were shown in subtest scores measuring vocabulary, pronunciation, comprehension, and active language use. The study found no clear evidence that a particular instructional approach is best for language-deficient children but that flexibility in the instructional approach, taking into consideration individual learner variables, may be most appropriate in improving language levels of these children. Demographic data revealed that 81% of limited-English-proficient children between the ages of three and five had no access to special assistance in language development until kindergarten or first grade. Many of these children came from homes in which parents spoke little English, and many came from backgrounds where low income levels were coupled with low expectations. The three-year follow-up to this program revealed a reduction in remedial services required by the participating students. The cost of the program was absorbed by the savings from this reduction within one year after the program ended (Weiss, 1988).

In 1982 Joan Tough conducted a longitudinal study of young children in England. Her findings on different social-class groups suggested that programs devoted to building vocabulary, practicing of syntactic structures, and using locational prepositions were too limited in scope. She found that the main problem of these at-risk children was that their expectations about using language did not support learning. The development and use of language should be the means for the at-risk child to develop self-motivated learning.

A longitudinal study on mother/child interaction patterns during preschool years was conducted by Dale Farran (1982). She found that many factors play a role in contributing to the academic problems of at-risk children—environment, ethnicity, the dominant culture, and the schools themselves. She found that the place for intervention to facilitate school performance for at-risk children was not in families but in schools.

Research by Catherine Snow (1982) on social-class differences in mothers' speech suggests that interactions with children while book reading provide opportunities for novel, complex, and creative use of language. Lynne Feagans (1982) studied social-class differences in children as they relate to school performance. She found that intervention programs often focused on language skills not reinforced in the schools.

Based on prior research, the following study on at-risk children was designed to achieve these objectives: 1) to provide opportunities for interaction between child and adult; 2) to encourage the development of concepts through concrete experiences, dialogue, and reflective thinking; 3) to assist children in adapting their language to the language of the classroom through the use of trade books (to learn about story framework, sequence of events, and new experiences); and 4) to encourage self-motivated learning through positive, successful learning experiences each day.

Sample Description and Design

Kindergarten students in four high-risk (Chapter 1) schools in Calcasieu Parish, Lousiana, were pretested in September, 1988, using Form C of *The Boehm Test of Basic Concepts* (The Psychological Corporation, 1986). The thirty-six students in each of the four schools who made the lowest scores on the test were assigned randomly to either the experimental or the control group. Experimental-group members received treatment in groups of three for thirty minutes each day. Control group members received no special treatment. A paid program supervisor was in attendance at each school every day to maintain the continuity of the program—setting out materials, collecting the children, making certain that volunteer tutors were in place, and substituting for them if necessary. Treatment was administered by volunteer tutors trained by the researchers. These were adult volunteers from the community who agreed to give one hour on a specific day each week to the program. Each adult volunteer tutored two different groups of three kindergarten students for 30 minutes each day. This provided interaction between the adult tutor and each at-risk kindergarten child every day throughout the study. During the 30-minute session the tutor presented basic concepts (over/under, near/far, etc.) for approximately 15 minutes. Concept development began at the concrete level, progressing from relating the concept to the children themselves to the use of concrete objects to the use of flannel board and felt pieces to the use of pictures to illustrate the concepts. Finally, individual worksheets were used to allow for application of the concept to the printed page. This progression, designed to meet objectives one, two, and four, took place over the eight months of the program.

The remaining fifteen minutes of the tutoring session were spent in reading tradebooks aloud to the children. During this time, new vocabulary words were introduced; concepts being developed were reinforced; story framework, sequence of events, and characters' feelings and experiences were examined; and children were involved in using language through questioning strategies (practicing predictive and problem-solving skills). These activities were designed to meet objectives one, two, three, and four.

Members of experimental and control groups were posttested during the first week in May, 1989, using Form D of *The Boehm Test of Basic Concepts* (The Psychological Corporation, 1986). Forms C and D are parallel forms and test the same 50 concepts.

Results of the Study

Tests were scored and results recorded. Statistical procedures were applied to these results. In testing the hypothesis that the experimental group would show greater increase in scores on the posttest than the control group, a t-test for significant differences in gain scores (difference between the pre and posttest score) was used. First, entering (pretest) scores for each group were tested. Variance was found to be homogeneous. Then gain score for each student tested was computed. A t-test was applied to the gain scores of the experimental and control groups. A significant difference at the .001 level in the gain scores in favor of the experimental group was found (Table 1).

Table 1

Gain Score Data for Kindergarten Boehm Test of Basic Concepts, 1988-89

Group	n	Mean	Standard Deviation
Experimental	67	14.015	12.075*
Control	71	5.986	15.123

*t = 3.46 *p*<.001

A t-test was run on the experimental- and control-group gain scores by schools. A significant difference at the .001 level at one school and at the .006 level at a second school was found in favor of the experimental groups. At the other two schools, however, t was not found to be significant (Table 2).

Table 2

Gain Score Data by Schools Boehm Test of Basic Concepts, 1988-89

School	n	Mean	Standard Deviation
One			
Pretest	18	10.6111	15.827
Postest	19	7.2632	15.923
Two			
Pretest	17	17.17647	8.212
Postest	18	10.2222	6.486*
Three			
Pretest	17	16.6471	5.989
Postest	17	1.6471	18.828**
Four			
Pretest	15	10.8667	14.6333
Postest	17	4.4118	16.474

*t = 3.00 $p<.001$ **t = 3.13 $p<.006$

Note: No significant differences in gain score were obtained for schools one and four.

Discussion

Results indicate that the intervention treatment of one adult working with small groups of at-risk kindergarten students every day for thirty minutes is successful in raising these children's understanding of the fifty basic concepts tested at the end of the kindergarten program. Part of the intervention treatment, however, focused on building general vocabulary, developing an understanding of story framework, and practicing predictive and problem-solving skills, none of which was tested by the posttest at the end of kindergarten.

The primary objective of the research project was to enable at-risk children to be successful in first-grade reading. Scores from the reading portion of an in-place end-of-year first-grade achievement test will be used as an indicator of success in first-grade reading. These scores will be forthcoming in early September, 1990.

Implication for Classroom Instruction

The intervention strategies applied in this study could be replicated in any kindergarten classroom through the use of volunteer adults, or older students if available. In addition to the learning of basic concepts, involvement with tradebooks and daily interaction with other adults and peers may increase these students' confidence and facility in language usage, as well as enhance their self-images. The ultimate goal is the success of these at-risk kindergarten children in first-grade reading, so that they will not become school drop-outs in the future.

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Student Teachers' Perceptions of Basal Reader Materials and Methodology

Leo M. Schell

One aspect of achieving excellence in reading is the ability of student teachers and beginning teachers to use commercial instructional materials such as basal readers confidently and effectively. If these teachers lack familiarity with and understanding of the commercial materials they use for reading instruction, negative consequences are possible. They may misuse them, spend an inordinate amount of time in preparation, or fail to take full advantage of certain features, all of which could negatively affect the achievement of their students.

The Role of Basal Readers in American Elementary Schools

The best estimate we have of how frequently basal readers are used in American elementary schools is it that they are used in the vast majority of classrooms. Aukerman (1981) stated, "there is an 80 to 90 percent probability that an elementary classroom teacher will be obliged to use them in some way or another." Despite the trend toward Whole Language and use of novels in reading instruction, the National Council of Teachers of English Commission on Reading stated, in late 1988, that basal reader series dominate reading instruction in roughly 90 percent of the elementary school classrooms in the United States (Goodman et al. 1988).

Two additional studies confirm these estimates. Smith and Saltz (1988) surveyed 391 schools nationwide on teachers' perceptions of basal reading series. Ninety-three percent of the respondents felt they were expected to follow the manual "very closely" or "somewhat closely" while only six percent believe they were expected "not to follow the manual very closely." The four beginning teachers in the study all felt the manual should be followed either "very closely" or "somewhat closely." Similarly, Barr and Sadow (1989) examined how fourth-grade teachers in two U. S. school districts used basal reading programs, concluding "the evidence from this [study] and other studies supports the conclusion that teachers rely heavily on basal programs" (p. 69). Thus it seems highly likely that most student teachers and beginning teachers will use basal readers in some way and will follow the manual fairly closely.

However, basal readers aren't always used as intended. Durkin (1984) investigated whether there was a match between what basal reader manuals recommend and what elementary school teachers do. She found that teachers tended to deviate from several recommendations in the manual. For example, she found that in the prereading aspect, teachers tended to minimize or ignore new vocabulary, background information, and prereading questions. However, they did an adequate job on postreading comprehension assessment questions.

Russavage, Lorton, and Mullham (1985) surveyed and observed 25 elementary school teachers in one district with respect to what they thought and did about basal readers. These teachers consistently identified basal reader manuals as including "few strategies for developing background knowledge or resolving conflicts of inaccurate prior knowledge" (p. 316). They also identified the broad area of skill instruction as a problem.

Basal Readers in Undergraduate Reading Education Courses

In the undergraduate elementary school reading education class at Kansas State University, one topic is the basal reader, accompanying materials, and related methodology. It seemed prudent to know how our students felt about these materials, how prepared and confident they were as a result of their course work, and how the student teachers used these materials during student teaching.

Another reason for gathering information about this topic was to evaluate the validity of this topic in the reading methods class. One way of configuring a methods class is "reality congruence." That is, what is taught in the reading methods course is partly determined by how reading is taught in the schools, particularly in the classrooms where the students will student teach. If there is too great an incongruence between the reading methods class and the way reading is taught in student teaching, a disservice may be done to all involved. Gathering information at the end of student teaching can provide glimpses into reading-instruction practices in these classrooms and permit any necessary course modification.

Methodology

Our student teaching ends with a one-and-one-half-day professional semester conference on campus. I developed a brief questionnaire about the basal reader, its accompanying materials, and related methodology (see Appendices). I administered it to 64 Elementary Education student teachers on the last day of the semester. I stressed the importance of candor and insightfulness to assure the validity of responses. I read each item and made any necessary comments and then had all students respond to each item all at once.

Results and Conclusions

1. Seventy-four percent of our student teachers reported basal readers were used four to five days a week in their student teaching classroom. This finding generally agrees with findings of previous research on the pervasiveness of basal reader use. Thus we need to continue preparing our student well to use the basal reader.

2. Forty percent of our student teachers reported at least occasional use of tradebooks in reading instruction in their student teaching classrooms. Whole Language concepts and tradebooks in reading instruction are making inroads in our geographic area and must be included in our reading methods course.

3. Students were quite secure about three parts of the Directed Reading Activity (DRA): (a) Vocabulary to be pre-taught, (b) discussion of the selection, and (c) skills. Therefore, our methods class instruction in these areas seems sound and should probably be continued as is with only minor modifications. What we are doing in the area of skills instruction seems sound and isn't causing our student teachers the same problems found by Russavage et al. (1985).

4. Because student teachers were least secure during the first several weeks of student teaching with (a) introduction of the selection and (b) extension/enrichment activities, we need to examine our reading methods class practices to see whether some changes need to be made in these areas. Durkin's study (1984) which found similar problems, may deserve our attention in this analysis.

5. Eighty-six percent of the students reported using teacher-constructed written activities 50 percent or more of the time. This figure is so high that a "reality congruence" model demands that our methods courses be examined to determine whether this topic is adequately dealt with. Further data collection examining student teachers' perceptions of their preparation and confidence in this area may also be justified.

6. How we deal with workbook/skillbook pages in our reading methods course needs to be studied for several reason: (a) Over half of the student teachers reported that an average of two or more pages were assigned per day, (b) no real problems were reported with explaining or scoring workbook pages, but nearly 20 percent of the student teachers reported some to much difficulty discussing and clarifying them after students had completed the work; (c) fifty-five percent of the student teachers reported discussing workbook pages after they were completed only half of the time or less, which means that about three fourths of the workbook pages never got discussed after they were completed. None of these topics (which could provide fruitful investigation) has been addressed in the research reviewed.

Discussion

Educators of reading teachers need information about the tasks their students will face in teaching reading during student teaching. A strong case can be made for a fairly high correspondence between the training reading teachers will receive and that they will give. Now seems an important time to gather such data because of the emphasis Whole Language and the use of tradebooks are receiving contrasted with that of basal readers. But for methods classes to be most effective, detailed information is also needed about items such as how prepared and confident student teachers feel about teaching parts of the DRA. Then all of this needs to be interpreted in light of previous research.

With regard to this specific study, what my colleagues and I seem to be doing in our undergraduate reading methods classes about basal reader methodology generally seems adequate. Our student teachers report fewer and less severe problems than those reported by classroom teachers in previous related research. But some minor adjustments described above are warranted.

This study also provides us with some baseline data with which we can make future comparisons and with which other researchers can compare their student teachers' perceptions. Equally important, we and others now have a mini-model—"reality congruence"—that permits us to determine how parts of our reading education courses correspond with the demands of student teaching. Both of these should permit us to configure our reading methods courses to the realities faced by our student teachers in order to achieve a higher excellence in reading.

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Appendix A

Perceptions of Basal Reader Materials and Methodology

1. Structured, school-like teaching experience while a college student:

_____ a. I have been a Teacher Aide (DED 100 Pre-Professional Lab) only.

_____ b. I have had *no* more than TWO significant, structured teaching experiences, e.g., Teacher Aide plus Friendship Tutoring.

_____ c. I have had more than two significant, structured teaching experiences, e.g., Teacher Aide plus Friendship Tutoring.

2. My cumulative GPA for all college work is: (Please don't round! $3.49 \neq 3.5$)

_____ a. 3.8 - 4.0 _____ c. 3.0 - 3.39 _____ e. 2.4 -2.59
_____ b. 3.4 - 3.79 _____ d. 2.6 - 3.0

3. Grade level I taught during Student Teaching:

_____ a. K _____ c. 2 _____ e. 4 _____ g. 6
_____ b. 1 _____ d. 3 _____ f. 5 _____ h. 7-8

4. About how often were basal reader materials (reader, workbook, worksheets, etc.) and/or ideas from the teacher's manual used in your Student Teaching classroom—by you and/or by your Cooperating Teacher? ON THE AVERAGE, TO SOME EXTENT:

_____ a. 5 days per week _____ d. 2 days per week
_____ b. 4 days per week _____ e. 1 day per week
_____ c. 3 days per week _____ f. Less frequently than e

5. How well prepared did you feel you were to use the basal reader as a result of your experiences in EDCI 474 Elementary School Reading?

Poorly		Moderately		Excellently
1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B

Perception of Basal Reader Materials and Methodology

DIRECTIONS: Honestly, objectively, insightfully, and professionally respond to the following items.

1. During the FIRST several weeks of Student Teaching, when your Cooperating Teacher used the basal reader, how much do you feel he/she relied upon the teacher's guide in planning and conducting reading instruction?

_____ a. 80-100% _____ c. 40-60% _____ e. 10-20%
_____ b. 60-80% _____ d. 20-40% _____ f. Less than 10% of the time.

2. During the LAST several weeks of Student Teaching, when you used the basal reader, how much did you rely upon the teacher's guide in planning and conducting reading instruction?

_____ a. 80-100% _____ c. 40-60% _____ e. 10-20%
_____ b. 60-80% _____ d. 20-40% _____ f. Less than 10% of the time.

3. Try to recall the first several weeks of Student Teaching. How confident did you feel with each of the following parts of the directed reading activity (DRA)?

Part	Quite Insecure		Moderately Secure		Quite Confident
a. Preparation/introduction	1	2	3	4	5
b. Vocabulary to be pre-taught	1	2	3	4	5
c. Comprehension/discussion	1	2	3	4	5
d. Skills instruction/workbook	1	2	3	4	5
e. Extension/enrichment	1	2	3	4	5

4. During the first several weeks of Student Teaching, in general, how closely did you rely upon the teacher's guide for each of the following parts of a DRA?

Part	Little/none		50-50		Almost totally
a. Preparation/introduction	1	2	3	4	5
b. Vocabulary to be pre-taught	1	2	3	4	5
c. Comprehension/discussion	1	2	3	4	5
d. Skills instruction/workbook	1	2	3	4	5
e. Extension/enrichment	1	2	3	4	5

5. How frequently did you assign written activities/exercises—either from the basal material or that you wrote—over the selection? e.g., true-false, matching, short answer, etc.

Never	Occasionally	50-50	Often	Nearly Always
1	2	3	4	5

6. How frequently were reading workbook/skill pages/seat work used in your classroom? On the average:

______ a. Two or more pages per day.
______ b. One page per day.
______ c. One page every two days.
______ d. One page every three days.
______ e. Less frequently than d.

7. How much difficulty did you have with any of these aspects of using workbook/skill pages?

	Little/ none		Some		Much
a. Explaining work to be done; instructions	1	2	3	4	5
b. Grading/checking/scoring	1	2	3	4	5
c. Discussing/clarifying *after* completion	1	2	3	4	5

8. How frequently did you discuss with the class/group a workbook/skill page after it had been completed?

Never	Occasionally	50-50	Often	Nearly Always
1	2	3	4	5

9. How frequently did your Cooperating Teacher use trade/library books instead of basal readers for reading *instruction* (not just for recreational reading)?

Never	Occasionally	50-50	Often	Nearly Always
1	2	3	4	5

10. If your Cooperating Teacher (CT) used the approach in 9, how prepared did you feel to use it as a result of EDCI 474 Elementary School Reading? Please DON'T respond if your CT didn't use this approach!!!

Poorly		Moderately		Excellently
1	2	3	4	5

11. With regard to the basal reader, the teacher's edition, and the workbook, what *significant* things did you have to do during Student Teaching that you felt ill-prepared to do?

a.

b.

c.

Using Mediated Instruction Within Theme-Based Instructional Contexts to Enhance Reading Comprehension

Alice Patterson, Victoria J. Risko

One way to achieve excellence in reading is to enhance students' use of strategies that can aid their ability to learn from text. Yet our findings in a previous study (Risko & Patterson, 1989) suggest that the instructional context is an important factor when determining whether a strategy contributes to increased reading comprehension. Merely telling students to use a target strategy may not contribute to their understanding of text. For example, we learned that asking students to take notes independently during their reading and allowing time for them to reflect on these notes was an insufficient aid for students' learning. Similarly, asking students to participate in a composing strategy with the teacher mediating learning (by helping students clarify text ideas) was not as effective as asking students to participate in the same composing strategy with teacher mediation facilitating links between text concepts and students' prior knowledge. We learned that composing (group notetaking) strategies designed to aid students' clarification and organization of texts ideas were particularly powerful when mediated instruction helped students link the use of the strategy to a knowledge base. Our findings suggest that strategic learning must be developed within a meaningful context. A strategy alone will not help comprehension unless students can link that strategy to a knowledge base—a knowledge base accessed during the study of the text.

Our previous study had two limitations that inhibited the generalization of our findings. First, our study was limited to two days of instruction in which the students read only two texts. We did not examine the effects of our procedures over an extended set of texts or period of time. Second, our control students were asked to take notes and reflect on these notes. It is possible that this directive alone was insufficient for priming students to select and organize important text ideas.

In our current study, we extended our instruction to allow the students to read several texts by the same author and to present each group with a procedure that could help them study and organize text ideas. We examined the effect of different notetaking strategies on students' ability to write story retellings, and we explored further the role of rich contexts for learning on students' use of these strategies.

Theoretical Framework

Mediated Instruction

We argue that while students experiencing reading comprehension problems may not spontaneously monitor their comprehension of texts, they will with appropriate instruction. Recent advances in cognitive psychology (e.g., Bransford, Vye, Adams, & Perfetto, 1985; Ragoff & Lave, 1984) and education (e.g., Au, 1980; Bransford, Kinzer, Risko, Rowe, & Vye, 1989) suggest that instructional conditions, such as mediated instruction, can have powerful effects on student learning. Mediated instruction (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978) can help students develop organized sets of knowledge and skills for comprehending texts and the ability to apply this information strategically. The teacher's role in learning is critical to the success of mediated learning in the classroom (Risko, 1989). Teachers as mediators do not simply convey their wisdom but also provide structure to the experiences of the students and appropriate feedback to children for making sense of these experiences. They help learners separate relevant from irrelevant information by prompting anticipation of events, just as they help learners connect various parts of their experiences. They arrange the learning environment so that their students will encounter certain experiences (e.g., novel concepts, different text structures) in which they are coached to apply strategies shown to them. Effective mediators encourage independent performance yet provide help (scaffolding) when necessary.

Providing students with strategies to monitor and increase comprehension is a common goal of reading comprehension research. For example, several researchers have reported that when students generate summaries following text reading, they show increased retention (e.g., Doctorow, Marks, & Wittrock, 1978; Taylor & Berkowitz, 1980) and activation of deliberate processing and planning strategies (e.g., Brown & Day, 1983; Brown, Day, & Jones, 1983; Winograd, 1984). Researchers have indicated, though, that students with poor comprehension have difficulty producing text retellings or summaries because of their insensitivity to important text elements (e.g., Flavell & Wellman, 1977; Bransford, Stein, Shelton, & Owings, 1980) and their inability to select, condense, and organize text ideas (e.g., Brown & Day, 1983).

Students experiencing comprehension problems often need explicit instruction on how to monitor their own reading. Researchers suggest that students who have difficulty comprehending text may be unable to choose and/or articulate appropriate reading strategies because of their limited knowledge of the reading strategies available. For example, students may realize that their interpretation of text ideas is faulty yet not know what to do to "fix up" their misunderstandings. These students may not realize that they need to rely on prior knowledge of text concepts to help them fill in the gaps between the author's stated ideas, or they may not know how to search the text for additional meaningful clues. Palincsar and Ransom (1988) suggest that students can successfully respond to "mysteries" of learning if they are aware "of the variables important to learning as well as their ability to respond and take control of their learning environment" (p. 784).

Strategic Learning

Davey's (1983) work indicates that verbalization can be an effective strategy to aid students' comprehension, a strategy that can be learned through a mediated-learning paradigm. The goal of this strategy is to have the student say everything he/she thinks while performing a task, no matter how trivial it may seem (Hayes & Flower, 1981; Afflerbach & Johnston, 1984; Lytle, 1985). Verbalizing called "think alouds," when used during reading, or "compose alouds," when used during writing, is one strategy associated with facilitating recall (Olshavsky, 1976-1977; Fagan, 1981; Hare & Smith, 1981; Strahan, 1982; Lytle, 1985; Flaro, 1987), organizing written compositions (Hayes & Flower, 1980; Easton, 1982; Schmaucher & Martin, 1983; Newell, 1984), and promoting higher-level thinking skills (Collins & Smith, 1980; Schoenfeld, 1982).

Although verbalizing thoughts is typically performed by students, teachers can use verbalizations as a tool for sharing teachers' thinking and for aiding students' noticing of information they might otherwise miss. In our previous study, we found that during reading, teacher and student verbalizations (group notetaking) enhanced low-achieving readers' retelling of a complicated and unfamiliar text passage. According to Davey (1983), if teachers describe their own thoughts about a text, students will realize how and when to describe their thoughts about a text. Herrmann (1988) suggests that teachers can provide less able readers the opportunity to observe the thinking processes that occur during reading.

Novak and Gowin (1984) combine a verbalization strategy with their use of concept maps to aid students' learning. Concept maps encourage students to organize text information by delineating the important ideas in hierarchical levels, from superordinate to subordinate (Novak & Gowin, 1984). Using an interview strategy, teachers and students share their thoughts aloud as they identify significant text ideas and determine the importance of these ideas. The purpose of a concept map is to prompt students to use the author's organizational structure to make connections among the ideas in the text (Muth, 1987). Berkowitz (1986) found that when completed appropriately, student-generated concept maps were an effective comprehension aid. Concept maps can be used to aid readers' differentiation of major and minor text ideas and to help students relate text ideas to major themes.

Instead of verbalizing during reading and/or writing, students can rehearse text ideas through notetaking (e.g., Weinstein & Mayer, 1984). Notetaking, according to Anderson and Armbruster (1984), allows the student to record a reworked version of the text. Although research on notetaking to aid reading comprehension has produced mixed results, Weinstein and Mayer (1986) view notetaking as a complex rehearsal task that is effective when it allows time for learners to select and practice information-gathering strategies. Notetaking may help students go beyond the superficial level of text processing to a deeper level. Deep processing allows readers to categorize and organize, compare concepts with other concepts, and combine new information with prior knowledge (Ballstaedt & Mandl, 1985).

Rich Contexts for Learning

Another way to think about strategic learning is influenced by the work of Risko (1989) and her colleagues within a macrocontext curriculum. A major purpose of instruction within such a curriculum is to provide a shared learning context for mediated learning. Macrocontexts provide a rich information base—information that can be examined from multiple perspectives—that is commonly shared by the teachers and students. This common context is important to the potential success of mediated learning because both the teachers and students can refer to this shared information as new concepts are explored. To be effective mediators, teachers must be aware of the various experiences their students have had that can provide a context for new learning. As Chapman (1978) indicates, relying on shared knowledge is relatively easy for parents, who have shared a great number of experiences with their children, but it can be very difficult for teachers to know which sets of experiences will provide support for each child's learning.

Method

Subjects

The participants were 60 eighth-grade students enrolled in an inner-city school. Three complete language arts classes were selected. Prior to this study, all students had received seven months of language arts instruction that involved them in taking and organizing text notes using story-grammar outlines or concept maps. Students were judged by their language arts teachers to be proficient in the use of these two strategies.

Materials

During the introductory session, all students watched a fifteen-minute autobiographical video in which Hal Holbrook, portraying Mark Twain, talked about Twain's life and events that influenced Twain's writing. Students read "A Biography of Mark Twain" (2 pages), "The Cat and the Pain Killer" (5 pages), "Cub Pilot in the Mississippi" (7 pages), "The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg" (12 pages), "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court" (11 pages), "Edward Mills and George Benton" (5 pages), and "The Californian's Tale" (4 pages). These passages, taken from *Reading Anthology* (Scholastic Books, Scope Series), a supplementary text for this school, had not been read by these students prior to our study.

Photocopies of entire passages with illustrations were read by the students. Before the study, the investigators divided each story into three meaningful parts, determined by the presentation of structural elements of the story. For example, the first pause occurred after the setting and the protagonist's goal has been introduced. The biography and each story was divided into approximately three equivalent units, with slashes placed at the end of each unit.

Procedure

Using percentile scores (reading subtest, Stanford Achievement Test), students were assigned to one of the four treatment groups, using a stratified randomization procedure. Each group met for seven days, the first an introductory session for the following six days. Four teachers were randomly assigned to each of the intervention groups and worked with this group througaout the study. The lessons for each day were scripted for consistency across all groups, and an independent observer evaluated each teacher's ability to follow the script. Observational data revealed 99% agreement with script guidelines. The same materials were used with all groups. Data were analyzed for days six and seven. For these days, "The Californian's Tale" and "Edward Mills and George Benton" were read. All other stories and the biography were assigned to each group in random order on the preceding days. Time was held constant across all group activities (i.e., 25 minutes were assigned to story reading and pauses for rehearsal, 10 minutes were assigned to concept mapping or reflection questions, and 10 minutes were allowed for writing retellings).

We analyzed written retellings of students participating in four groups: two mediated— (1) a group-verbalization and concept-mapping strategy, and (2) a variation of the group-verbalization strategy, in which a prereading activity (thematic organizer) was added to highlight central theme information—and two non-mediated— (3) a notetaking strategy in which the prereading activity was added to students' independent generation of notes and concept mapping, and (4) (the control group) a notetaking strategy in which students followed a story frame to generate their own notes and answer a set of postreading reflection questions. The story frame, selected for the fourth group, contained explicit cues for student selection of important story information.

Across all conditions, students were asked to watch the video on Mark Twain and read the Mark Twain biography and the selected Mark Twain narratives. Reasons for Mark Twain's writing (e.g., social satire) were introduced in the video biography of Mark Twain, viewed by all students, and were the theme of the unit of instruction for the three experimental groups. For these three groups, instruction highlighted thematic relationships between the narratives and biography. For example, the students would first read the story to understand the plot information. Then they would reread the story to discuss Twain's writing style, such as his use of satire for developing character traits. Students in these three groups reread stories on the second and fourth days rather than reading a new story. This rereading allowed the students to examine the text from another perspective and provided more indepth study of the thematic information. For the fourth group, a new Twain narrative was read each day, and each text was treated discretely, with no explicit connectives being provided across the texts. During the introductory session, each group viewed the Mark Twain video. Three general questions—Who was Mark Twain? What can you tell us about Mark Twain and What did Mark Twain write?—guided the postviewing discussion. On the second and subsequent days, the students and teacher in each group read the assigned text passage and practiced the assigned notetaking strategy.

In the mediated group in which there was group verbalization and concept mapping, the students and teacher read the text parts silently. They verbalized their thoughts during the preselected pauses in the story, with the teacher prompting students to discuss thematic information (e.g., Twain's purpose for writing) by relating biographical information to the narratives. The teacher recorded all responses on an overhead transparency. This procedure was followed for the three sections of the text, with verbalized ideas placed on a new transparency each time. After the story was completed, the teacher and students reviewed ideas by taking turns reading ideas from all transparencies. Next, the teacher asked students to discuss and identify one idea that best told what the story was about. The teacher wrote this on the board and drew a circle around it. The teacher asked students to identify the next most important ideas and to explain how they were related to the idea in the first circle. She continued in this manner until ideas generated by students were mapped at their respective hierarchical levels, following the procedure identified by Novak and Gowin (1984). When students and/or the teacher disagreed with the selection of story ideas, discussion continued until a consensus was reached. This procedure was followed on each subsequent day.

The mediated theme-focused group followed the same procedure as the first group, with the exception that a thematic organizer (Risko & Alvarez, 1986) was provided prior to reading. The content of the organizer connected story information to general experiences believed to be relevant to students' prior knowledge (e.g., times when they might have been treated unfairly) and required students to make predictions about what they would read based on what they knew about Mark Twain's writing. After reading the organizer and writing their predictions, the students and teacher followed the group verbalization strategy described above.

In the theme-focused, independent-generation-of-notes group, the students were asked to complete the thematic organizer activity as described above. Then the students were asked to read each passage silently and stop at each slash mark to write important ideas. After the reading and notetaking was completed, students were asked to construct a concept map of the text ideas. The thematic organizer, notetaking, and mapping activities were completed independently by each student. This same procedure was followed on each day.

In the story outline, independent-generation-of-notes group, the teacher and students explained how they would use a story grammar outline (a sheet of paper with headings: setting, story problem/goal, events, resolution) to identify and write story information when they paused at each of the three slash marks. Following the reading, students were asked to reflect on their notes by answering a set of questions requiring story structure information (e.g., Where did this story take place? What were the main character's problems?). Students answered these questions independently in writing. On each subsequent day, students were reminded of the procedure for the lesson and asked to independently complete their notetaking and reflection.

After completing its respective notetaking strategy, each group was asked to write a retelling by following this directive: "Write everything you would say to tell this story to someone who has not read it. Be as complete as possible in your retelling."

Scoring

The students' retellings were analyzed using a variation of Morrow's (1986) scoring system to evaluate students' generation of well-formed story retellings. Each retelling was scored by two independent raters using Morrow's procedure for four categories of story grammar: setting, theme, plot episodes, and resolution. Instead of evaluating each retelling for inclusion of sequence (a fifth category suggested by Morrow), we scored each retelling for story cohesiveness, using the procedure described in Appendix A. Raw scores for all five categories were adjusted to equal 10, by placing raw scores over maximum scores and multiplying by 10 (see Morrow, 1986). Interrater reliability for each analysis was within the range of .92 to .95.

Results

Retelling performance on the last two passages (days 6 and 7) used during the intervention was examined. On day 6, students were allowed to refer to their notes while writing their retellings. On day 7, notes were collected prior to the retelling activity. Additionally, on day 7, students were asked to respond to seven short-answer questions requiring them to compare and contrast story ideas and/or discuss Twain's writing style (e.g., use of characterization). These questions, referred to as transfer questions, required the students to generalize information across the video and the text set. Three data sets were analyzed using a one-way analysis of variance. The data included means and standard deviations for (a) total retelling scores for each passage, (b) story component scores (setting, theme, plot episodes, resolution, and story unity) for each passage, and (c) total scores for the transfer questions.

Passages with Notes Available

The analysis of students' retellings using total scores revealed a significant group effect. $F(3, 48) = 3.32$ ($p < .05$) (see Table 1 for means and standard deviations for the total retelling scores). A Newman Keuls *post hoc* test revealed that the group means for the mediated theme-focus group, mediated group-verbalization and concept-mapping group, and independent-notes theme-focus group were significantly higher than the mean of the group who took independent notes while following a story grammar outline ($p < .05$).

Second, the data were analyzed using a multiple analysis of variance to examine performance by group on each of the story components (see Table 2 for means and standard deviations for each of the component scores). The analysis revealed a significant group effect, $F'(15,128) = .62$ ($p < .05$). The univariate *F-tests* revealed that the mean scores for the first three groups were significantly better than the fourth group in the areas of plot episodes, $F(3, 48) = 4.2$ ($p < .01$), and story unity, $F(3, 48) = 3.7$ ($p < .05$). Means in all components were higher for these three groups and for the fourth group, but only two were statistically significant.

Passages with No Notes Available

Analyzing students' retellings using total scores revealed no significant group effect, $F(3, 40) = 1.85$ ($p < .05$) (see Table 1 for means and standard deviations for each group's scores). Students in the first three groups outperformed students in the fourth group, but statistical significance was not attained.

A multiple analysis of variance was conducted to evaluate performance by group on each of the story components (see Table 3 for means and standard deviations). The analysis revealed a significant group effect, $F'(15,95) = 5.4$ ($p < .01$). The univariate *F-tests* revealed that the mean score for group 2 was significantly better than the mean score of the other groups on the setting factor, $F(3, 37) = 47.5$ ($p < .01$); the mean scores for groups 1 and 3 were significantly better than the mean score of group 2 and the mean score of group 3 was significantly better than group 4 on the resolution factor, $F(3, 37) = 8.29$ ($p < .05$); and the mean scores for groups 1, 2, and 3 were better than the mean score for group 4 on the story unity factor, $F(3, 37) = 4.14$ ($p < .05$). No other comparisons reached statistical significance.

Performance on Transfer Questions

The analysis of students' answers on the set of seven questions using total scores revealed a significant group effect, $F(3,48) = 3.40$ ($p < .05$)

(means and standard deviations for each group are reported on Table 1). A Newman Keuls *post hoc* test revealed that the group mean for the mediated theme-focus group (group 1) was significantly higher than the mean of the other three groups ($p < .05$).

Discussion

In this study, we examined the effect of four notetaking procedures, three of which were developed within mediated and thematically-tied contexts, on students' ability to retell important story ideas. Several findings can be discussed. First, all three experimental strategies were more effective, over all, in contributing to students' retelling ability than asking students to take notes following a story-frame outline. The analysis of total scores suggests that the three notetaking strategies were more robust when students were allowed to refer to their notes. Nevertheless, the analysis of story elements generation in students' written retellings suggests that these three strategies helped students generate key story ideas across both the with-notes and without-notes conditions. Students participation in the three experimental conditions consistently generated retellings that were more cohesive and unified than those of their peers participating in the control group.

Second, the rich context provided by either teacher mediation, the thematic organizer, or both is a factor common to all three experimental groups. The thematic organizer combined with either mediated or student-generated notetaking strategies and the mediated strategy alone enhanced students' use of the notetaking strategy. Each procedure aided students' rehearsal and active processing of text ideas (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986) by encouraging students to focus on thematic information and by prompting students to clarify and organize story ideas.

The teacher as a mediator (as one who encourages students' elaboration, clarification, and organization) can enhance notetaking and comprehension, as shown by our students' performance in two of our four groups. It is important to note that the story-grammar procedure did not mediate students' learning. Students in the fourth group were asked to use a story-grammar outline to facilitate their notetaking and to answer story-grammar questions to reflect on their notes. Yet these students did not access this information spontaneously, even when they were allowed to refer to their notes, to help them produce their retellings. When comparing the with- and without-notes conditions, we found mean scores for the story grammar group to be higher when students did not refer to their notes. Even though this group was primed specifically to rehearse story grammar information, their retellings displayed limited use of this information to guide their recall and organization of story ideas. Without teacher mediation to help students understand how the outline could aid recall, it could be that the story grammar outline and corresponding questions were viewed as an irrelevant exercise rather than a tool that could help their conceptualization of the story.

Further, these findings seem to support the hypothesis, advanced by Bransford, Franks, Vye, and Sherwood (1989), Bransford, Sherwood, and Hasselbring (1988), and Bransford, Vye, Kinzer, and Risko (in press), that instruction should provide students with a strategy and a context for actively constructing knowledge by using that strategy. Failure to access relevant strategies is often the result of the students' being uninformed about the usefulness of the strategy. Also, strategic learning must be developed within a meaningful context. A strategy alone will not help comprehension unless students can link that strategy to a knowledge base. What students think about during reading is as important as the selection of a learning strategy. Providing students with relevant content (e.g., rich thematic units containing a strong semantic network) while developing a strategy to access and rehearse text ideas can help students understand how contextual information can serve as a tool for making sense of text ideas.

Last, the mediated theme-focused group was the only group to significantly outperform their peers on the set of transfer questions. This finding, similar to the findings reported by Alvarez and Risko (1989), suggests that some students may require an explicit explanation of conceptual relationships across texts and that multiple elaborations on the concepts are needed to facilitate generalizability of ideas (Anderson, 1983; Anderson & Reder, 1979; Risko & Alvarez, 1986).

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APPENDIX A

Assessing Retellings for Study Cohesiveness and Unity

We analyze students' retellings to determine if they contain a coherent representation of story meaning. This analysis provides us with information about students' ability to form a "story line," in which parts of a story (e. g., opening, characters, plot) are clearly related. Therefore, presenting story information in a correct sequential order is a minimum requirement, but scoring represents both sequence and cohesiveness.

To determine cohesion among story elements, we've interpreted the 5th category of Morrow's scoring system to be:

Story Unity (maximum raw score 4)

Setting 1 pt is assigned only when students present an opening relevant to characters who are identified and to setting (place, time) information.

Theme 1 pt is assigned when what is stated above leads logically into (a) an initiating event consistent with opening information that student has already stated and (b) an identification of goals related to the initiating event (i.e., initiating event set up reasons for goal statements).

Explicit information about characters' motives for goal setting is noted, but not required.

Plot 1 pt is assigned when events (actions and reactions) are not only provided in sequential order but also follow logically the information presented above. Plot information needs to include characters named above and make sense according to students' statement of initiating event and goal(s) statement. Number of events is not counted, but students' retelling must reflect gist of major and supportive events.

Resolution 1 pt is assigned when students explain how goal is attained (i.e., problem is solved) and the story ends with a statement (e.g., summary sentence or two, statement of moral) bringing closure to story ideas.

Total raw score ______________
Maximum raw score ____________ x 10
Total adjusted score ____________

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for retelling units on treatment passage with notes and no notes and responses on transfer measure.

	Notes			No Notes			Transfer Questions		
Group	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD
Mediated Theme Focus	16	24.7*	9.2	13	24.7	8.78	15	4.5*	1.5
Mediated	16	28.5*	12.1	12	25.7	9.7	14	3.1	1.5
Ind. Notes Theme Focus	12	23.7*	14.1	10	24.4	9.0	11	3.3	1.4
Ind. Notes Story Outline	8	12.2	9.9	6	15.4	10.4	12	3.0	1.1

Note. Maximum scores possible for retelling was 50. Maximum score for question was 7.
*p<.05 group 1, 2, 3, >4

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for students' written retelling of story elements on treatment passage with notes

		Setting		Theme		Plot		Resolution		Story Unity	
Group	n	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Mediated Theme Focus	16	4.7	2.0	4.4	4.4	7.2*	3.6	3.9	2.2	4.5*	3.1
Mediated	16	4.1	2.7	6.3	4.3	6.9*	3.6	4.2	2.6	6.3*	3.8
Ind. Notes Theme Focus	12	4.5	2.6	3.8	4.3	5.8*	3.6	4.2	3.2	5.4*	3.7
Ind. Notes Story Outline	8	3.4	1.1	2.5	3.7	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.9	1.6	2.3

Note. Maximum score possible for each story grammar unit was 10.
*p<.05, group 1, 2, 3,>4

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for students' written retelling of story elements on treatment passage with notes

	Setting[a]			Theme		Plot		Resolution[b]		Story Unity[c]	
Group	n	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Mediated Theme Focus	13	3.1	.9	3.1	3.3	7.7	2.6	5.6*	2.9	5.2*	2.8
Mediated	12	8.8*	2.3	4.2	2.7	5.2	4.1	1.5	1.6	6.0*	2.9
Ind. Notes Theme Focus	10	3.3	1.1	2.5	3.5	7.5	3.5	7.0*	2.9	4.5*	2.8
Ind. Notes Story Outline	6	1.7	.6	3.8	1.4	5.4	4.0	3.3	4.1	1.3	2.1

Note. Maximum score possible for each story grammar unit was 10.
*p<.05, [a]2>4, 1, 3
[b]1, 3,>2; 3>4
[c]1, 2, 3>4

Developmental Reading Classrooms as Practicum Sites for Prospective English Teachers

Chester Laine, Terry Bullock, Karen Ford

During the past seven years, two units within a large midwestern university offered a practicum experience for preservice teachers in English education. Approximately fifteen students, in their junior or senior year, complete one of their field experiences in a college developmental reading setting, requiring the cooperation of a college of education and a two-year open-admissions college. This study examines the effectiveness of a college reading practicum site for the preparation of secondary English Language Arts teachers.

Approximately 30% of the students preparing to be secondary English language arts teachers have a baccalaureate degree when they enter the program; another 30% pursue both a BS in Education and a BA in English or Communications. Field experiences and course work requirements are designed to comply with NCTE's (National Council of Teachers of English) *Guidelines for the Preparation of English Language Arts Teachers.*

The students are placed with college developmental reading teachers in a wide range of classes, including effective reading and study, speed reading, strategic reading, and college study skills. The classes typically meet for fifty minutes three times each week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) or for seventy-five minutes twice each week (Tuesday and Thursday). This schedule coincides with the other college classes the students are taking. Coupled with the fact that the college developmental classes are offered on campus, this makes the on-campus practicum very time efficient.

Early placement allows the students to enter the classroom on the day the college developmental students arrive. They meet their field-hour obligations by attending the class each day it meets. They begin by observing and gradually assume more and more responsibility for assessing individual students, designing intervention strategies, tutoring, providing non-instructional assistance, teaching small groups, and eventually teaching larger groups of students.

Research Questions

Our study was designed to:

- describe an alternative model for placing preservice secondary English language arts education students in a college developmental practicum site;
- examine the benefits for the practicum student who works with fewer students and more highly trained cooperating teachers in a more highly controlled site;
- explore the benefits to the college developmental reading program;
- examine an inter-collegial cooperative effort for training preservice education majors.

Significance of the Study

A college practicum site provides a unique model for preservice education majors. This practicum offers an educational experience falling between micro-teaching experiences and the traditional public school field placement. Specifically, the preservice education students work with highly trained reading experts able to model a variety of classroom teaching strategies, to demonstrate how to develop materials, and to organize the classroom for instruction. The preservice teachers are then able to implement many of these activities in a situation where they can focus on how well their implementation proceeds rather than worry about how to maintain or regain control of the class.

Literature Review

University personnel have traditionally viewed field experience as critically important in the training of preservice teachers. Practitioners, too, have stressed the value of the practicum experience in developing the practical skills of teaching (Lortie, 1975). However, in spite of this support for the field experiences, researchers have repeatedly pointed out the many difficulties (Dewey, 1965; Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1984; Zeichner, 1988). One of the primary concerns has been the tendency of the practicum experience to focus on the development of managerial rather than instructional skills (Hoy, 1967; Hoy & Rees, 1977). A "group management" orientation prevents preservice teachers from assuming the role of the instructional leader.

Prospective teachers, overwhelmed with the complexity of the classroom, often concentrate on keeping order. A trial-and-error approach to learning about teaching is fostered rather than one involving reflection, careful thought, and scholarship. Management is placed at the center of teaching, possibly at the expense of student learning. Only after concerns about survival are met will preservice teachers focus on issues of curriculum and the impact of instruction on children. Faced with a strong desire to focus on *why* things are done in the classroom rather than just *how* they are done, we began to experiment with using developmental reading classes as sites for preparing students to teach secondary English.

The current study examines a field experience that eliminates much of the tendency to focus on the development of classroom management techniques at the expense of instructional strategies. Students in this practicum site are not submitted to the constant interruption and need to discipline that frequently plagues the traditional field experience. Nor are they prone to develop the unrealistic impression of classroom teaching that frequently happens with the small "micro-teaching" setting. This setting attempts to achieve a balanced experience which helps to maximize the development of instructional strategies and techniques.

Method

The study took place at a comprehensive research institution in the midwest. A college of education and a two-year open-admissions college collaborated for over six years to offer preservice secondary English education students the opportunity to do one of their field experiences in a college developmental reading site.

Sample

The subjects of this study were recent graduates of the English education teacher preparation program. They had taken four English language arts methods courses (Teaching English Language Arts, Teaching Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum, Teaching Secondary Reading, and Teaching Literature in the Secondary Schools) between the autumn of 1983 and the spring of 1988.

Procedure

A 19-item questionnaire (Appendix) was mailed to 79 former practicum students in October, 1989, with an arbitrary cutoff date for returns set for December, 1989. By that time, 27 subjects had returned the questionnaire (results displayed on Table 1). The questionnaire items were adapted from items developed and pretested for two years by the faculty in English Education and the faculty in the Reading and Study Program.

Subjects' responses to 13 forced-choice items were ranked, and a mean response for each item was calculated and recorded. Subjects were also encouraged to respond to 6 open-ended questions, designed to elicit information about how this practicum differed from other field experiences, how this practicum prepared them for student teaching and teaching, and what changes should be made for this practicum experience. The responses were analyzed by creating categories of responses most frequently made. The data accumulated in this analysis were then examined to determine common patterns of experience.

Results

In general, based upon mean responses to all of the forced-choice items, subjects felt that their field experience in a college developmental setting was valuable. None of the means fell below 3.5; the mean across the thirteen items was 3.7. These former practicum interns perceived that learning opportunities were available in this college reading setting. They identified the following areas as especially valuable: feedback from the cooperating teacher; accessibility of the college reading instructor for discussions, planning, etc; accessibility of the college of education supervisor for discussion; opportunities to interact with the students; feedback from the supervisor; and the convenience of scheduling the practicum experience around required education, arts, and science courses.

Based upon the perceptions of these teachers, fewer opportunities were available in some other areas. These included opportunities to grade papers, teach classes, apply classroom instruction and research in the practicum setting, learn more about the reading process, and contribute their own ideas in the planning process.

In addition to these 13 items, these former students had an opportunity to respond to 6 open-ended questions. When asked to think back on this unique field experience and consider how it prepared them for student teaching and their first year of teaching, former students pointed to the individual and cultural diversity of the classes. In this college reading setting, developmental students classified as "learning disabled" or "English as a second language learners" are frequently enrolled. In addition to the cultural diversity of the students, respondents also cited individual diversity as a strength of this college reading practicum setting. Although some of the developmental students were reading nearly well enough to succeed at college tasks, others had significant problems. The small class sizes and the lack of traditional control problems allowed the preservice teachers to work closely with individual development students.

Table 1

Rank Order, Item Number, and a Mean Response of Subjects (N=27) Responding to a 13-item Questionnaire on Effectiveness of Practicum in College Reading Setting

Item Rank	Number	Item	Mean Response (on a scale of 5)*
1	10	feedback from the cooperating teacher	4.4
2	2	accessibility of instructor for discussions, planning, etc.	4.3
3	3	accessibility of supervisor for discussion	4.2
3	6	opportunities to interact with students	4.2
5	11	feedback from the supervisor	4.1
6	1	convenience of scheduling practicum experience	4.0
7	4	opportunities to develop and utilize teaching materials	3.8
7	13	understanding gained about teaching students who have difficulties reading to learn	3.8
9	5	opportunities to grade papers	3.6
9	7	opportunities to teach classes	3.6
9	9	opportunities to apply classroom instruction and research in the practicum setting	3.6

Item Rank	Number	Item	Mean Response (on a scale of 5)*
9	12	understanding gained about the reading process	3.6
13	8	opportunities to contribute your own ideas in the planning process	3.5

* 1 = minimal; 3 = some; 5 = extensive

> This practicum helped me to be more sensitive to the students in the class who are below average in their reading levels.

For some of these students participating in their first teaching field experience, the college reading setting helped them develop some initial confidence.

> Honestly, this was one of my most memorable practicums. It's difficult to say *exactly* how this practicum helped prepare me for teaching on my own, but I do know it helped me find some success and build some self-confidence.

In another open-ended question, respondents were asked to contrast the field experience in the college reading setting with their student teaching experience. The former students pointed to the fact that they could concentrate on reading difficulties and that they had more opportunities for small-group and individual instruction.

> I feel that this practicum gave me an extra edge on understanding students with reading problems. It really helped when I had a few students in my regular student teaching classes that didn't have average reading skills. I felt that I could help these students with their poor study skills.

Another respondent noted that

> It was nice that the focus was on reading. In regular English practicum classrooms, basically, what I saw was grammar and writing instruction. It was helpful to see the reading focus. I still use the things I learned.

When asked whether this college reading field experience changed their attitudes about teaching, these former students explained that working with older students illustrated the importance of motivation in reading to learn. The importance of early reading instruction was also made very clear as they struggled to help older students improve their comprehension of content materials. Finally, getting close to students with significant reading problems made them more aware of the individual student's needs.

All of the other field experiences in this program were in public or private secondary school sites. When asked to contrast this experience with those other experiences, students often mentioned the ease of scheduling. Accessibility to the resources available on campus was frequently mentioned. Others mentioned that this was the first time that they were together with a cohort group at a practicum site. Still others found the practicum provided them with new insights into the university and new relationships with university professors.

In a less positive vein, some students found that teaching peers was awkward and that the "atypical" classrooms—classes of ten or fifteen fairly well motivated students—was not preparing them for the "real world." One students asserts:

> I felt that the practicum was artificial to a certain degree and much like working in a controlled environment. The problems often encountered in off-campus sites were not present.

Another explains that:

> It was my first practicum experience, so it gave me my first taste of teaching, but it made me think that all of my students were going to be as receptive, and my sophomores are nothing like college students.

Discussion

The findings from the survey indicated that the current practicum students generally view this experience as positive. The benefits of this experience primarily focused on the site's convenient location and on the setting's role in expanding their awareness of cultural and individual diversity. The students indicated that the closeness of the practicum site made the experience "easier" for them. In addition, the nature of the practicum reduced the discipline demands and thus provided an "easier" working environment, an environment where they were able to learn more about reading and to learn more about the strengths and weaknesses of individual students. Areas of concern centered on the "atypical" nature of the classrooms and the older, more motivated students.

Based on these findings, this practicum experience will continue to be offered for preservice English education majors. In the future, more time will be spent in the beginning of the practicum experience to bring students, teachers, and supervisors together to discuss the variety of reading classes available for practicum students; the roles and expectations of teachers, students, and supervisors; and the types of activities in these classrooms. In addition, there will be greater attention paid to coordinating activities between the practicum experience and the methods classes. These modifications should make this practicum experience a richer learning experience for the cooperating teachers, developmental students, preservice teachers, and supervisors.

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Appendix

Reading and Study Practicum Evaluation: Alumni

Name: Years of Teaching Experience:

Current Address:

A. Circle the Number of Your Choice

	minimal		some		extensive
1. convenience of scheduling practicum experience	1	2	3	4	5
2. accessibility of instructor for discussions, planning, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
3. accessibility of supervisor for discussions	1	2	3	4	5
4. opportunities to develop and utilize teaching materials	1	2	3	4	5
5. opportunities to grade papers	1	2	3	4	5
6. opportunities to interact with students	1	2	3	4	5
7. opportunities to teach classes	1	2	3	4	5
8. opportunities to contribute your own ideas in the planning process	1	2	3	4	5
9. opportunities to apply classroom instruction and research in the practicum setting	1	2	3	4	5
10. feedback from the supervisor (teacher who worked with you at the practicum site)	1	2	3	4	5
11. feedback from the supervisor (person from the College of Education who observed you)	1	2	3	4	5
12. understanding gained about the reading process	1	2	3	4	5
13. understanding gained about teaching students who have difficulties reading to learn	1	2	3	4	5

B. How did this practicum in reading and study help you to prepare for student teaching and your first teaching position?

C. What changes, if any, do you feel would improve this practicum experience for future students?

D. How was this practicum experience different from your other practicum experiences?

E. Did this practicum, in any way, change your attitude about teaching? If so, describe this change of attitude.

F. All of your other field experiences were in public or private school sites. What were the advantages and disadvantages of having a practicum experience at a campus site?

G. Please feel free to make any other comments or responses regarding your practicum experience in the Reading and Study Program in University College.

H. Would you like a copy of the results of this survey. _ yes _ no

Developing Case Studies to Prepare Reading Educators

Roger G. Eldridge, Jr.

The case study as a research design and the case study as a method of instructional strategy have had a long and robust history in numerous academic disciplines. In 1871, professors at Harvard University Law School began using case studies to prepare future lawyers (Carter & Unklesbay, 1989). Other law schools quickly followed the lead, establishing a tradition of case studies for instructional purposes in legal education. Then, in 1910, the Harvard University School of Business initiated the use of case studies to prepare future businessmen to meet the rough-and-tumble challenges of the business world (Christensen & Hansen, 1987). Professors in the schools of medicine followed with case studies to train future doctors. In recent years, case studies as teaching tools have been widely used by professors in many different disciplines.

I have several purposes for writing this paper. First, I want to present clearly a distinction between the case study as research and the case study as method. I discuss the confusions that exist between the two in education. To achieve this purpose, I identify and describe the characteristics of case study as a research design. Being aware of the characteristics of a case study enables an investigator to discover and understand highly complex contextual situations. Additionally, I identify several reasons for using what we will consistently term the case method to prepare preservice reading teachers for the contingencies they will encounter in the classroom as they deliver reading instruction. My position is that case study research should be implemented to develop cases that can be used in the application of the case method as an instructional strategy in professional reading education. Case studies and the case study method are not the same and they are not to be confused as being the same, but there is a significant relationship between the two.

Confusions About Case Studies in Education

Recently, the term "case study" has been associated with professional teacher education (Greenwood & Parkay, 1989; Henson, 1988; Kowalski, Weaver & Henson, 1990; Shulman & Colbert, 1987). Descriptions of case studies and prescriptions for using case studies in education have become frequent content in professional teacher education books and journals. The assimilation of the terminology associated with case studies has not been without problems, however. Teacher educators have used "case study" to describe a variety of activities including a research design, procedures that follow a diagnosis, and a method or technique of teaching or tracing the past of a person, group, or institution. There appears to be little consensus among education professionals about what constitutes the meaning of the term "case study" (Merriam, 1988). Teacher educators make little distinction between the various activities that such separate terms as *casework, case method, case history,* and *case study* designate.

Much confusion exists from education professionals using such terms interchangeably, confusion which should be eliminated. Case study research is not the same as casework, or the case method, or a case history. Casework denotes "the developmental, adjustment, remedial, or corrective procedures that appropriately follow diagnosis of the causes of maladjustment" (Good & Scates, 1954, p. 729). Reading professors engaged in teaching courses about the diagnosis and remediation of reading difficulties are familiar with the concept and procedures of casework. Case method, on the other hand, is an instructional technique educators use to present the major ingredients of a case study to students in order to illustrate a teaching situation or phenomenon or to provide problem-solving experiences. As an instructional technique, the case method is used to establish a framework for students to contemplate, discuss, and debate problematic instructional situations (Yin, 1984). Shulman (1990) and Broudy (1990) advocate the use of the case method for instructional purposes, and each is involved in the process of developing case studies to be used in case method instruction. Case histories are used in much the same way that casework is used, to facilitate service to a patient or client. Educators must recognize and maintain the distinctions inherent in the separate definitions of case study and case method in order to foster an understanding of the functions and eliminate the confusions about the two different concepts.

Case Study Research Design

Case study research is part of the qualitative research paradigm. Unlike investigators who employ quantitative methods and focus their attention on identifying the single objective reality of a situation, investigators employing qualitative methods attempt to discover multiple realities within a particular context (Berger & Luckman, 1966). Investigators employing qualitative research designs, such as case study designs, see the world not as an objective thing but as a function of personal insight, interpretation, and perception. Frequently, but not always, an investigator identifies a particular dilemma as the central focus of a case study research design. All methods for gathering data about the dilemma are acceptable to the qualitative investigator. That is, an investigator may use a test, a survey, an observation, or an interview. Certain techniques, such as interviewing and observing, however, are used more often than other techniques as an investigator develops a case study.

Merriam (1988) identifies four essential properties of a case study: particularistic, descriptive, heuristic, and inductive. A discussion of these essential properties provides a clear distinction between case studies and other endeavors such as casework and the case method. A case study is particularistic because the focus of the study is on a particular situation, event, entity, or phenomenon. The investigator must incorporate into the case history of the dilemma within the contextual setting. Also, the investigator must show the immediacy of the dilemma to indicate why the moment is important. Likewise, the investigator must account for simultaneity by describing all that is going on in the contextual environment. Shaw (1978, p. 2) states that case studies "concentrate attention on the way particular groups of people confront specific problems, taking a holistic view of the situation. They are problem centered, small scale, and entrepreneurial endeavors."

While conducting case study research, an investigator concentrates on a single situation or phenomenon to discover significant factors characteristic of the situation or phenomenon within a particular context. The goal of the investigator is to seek a holistic description and explanation of the phenomenon under study. The investigator is not intent on prescribing an answer to a problem or situation. On the contrary, the investigator seeks to describe the complexity of a particular phenomenon using literary techniques to elicit images and analyze situations (Wilson, 1979). The intent of a case study investigator is to provide descriptions of the participants' cognitive features and to describe the elements of the culture as the features and elements interact in a particular contextual setting.

A case study is descriptive when an investigator offers what Geertz (1973) calls "thick description" of the phenomenon in a particular contextual setting. Thick description is a complete, literal description of the phenomenon under study. The description is usually stated in qualitative language, usually unencumbered by quantitative data or quantitative language. Cronbach (1975, p. 123) states that case study research is differentiated from other research designs by "interpretation in context." The investigator offers a multidimensional view, including not only the dimensions of the teaching and learning environment but also the social aspects of the setting.

Merriam (1988) also identifies a case study as heuristic. Merriam states that investigators employing a case study research design "illuminate the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under study. They can bring about the discovery of new meaning, extend the reader's experience or confirm what is known" (p. 13). Characteristics and variables previously unknown about a phenomenon emerge in the description and cause readers to develop new understandings about the phenomenon. Additionally, readers gain new insights into how phenomena get to be as they are.

Merriam (1988) identifies the final essential property of a case study as its being inductive. Investigators using case study research designs rely upon inductive reasoning. The investigators do not enter a context with preconceived hypotheses about how the situation will look or be. Rather, case study investigators describe concepts and formulate generalizations based on the data grounded in the particular contextual environment. The concepts and generalizations emerge from the data.

I believe there are some additional salient considerations in the implementation of a case study research design. One particular bias I have as regards the development of a case study in education is that the case must be based on actual observations of a classroom dilemma. The observations must be context bound. Only when the actual classroom is the setting can a full understanding of a dilemma be attained. Dilemmas do not occur isolated from reality. Dilemmas are part of reality. Cases created from armchairs lack the contextual essence surrounding the dilemma. Also, the descriptions concocted of the contextual setting tend to be muted and fail to provide a believable picture of the teaching dilemma. Direct observation is required to fully understand the dilemma in context. Contextual elements cannot be omitted without changing the dilemma. The actual development of classroom-based cases provides investigators with excellent opportunities to enter into collaborative relationships with classroom teachers.

Case Method and Teaching

At the center of a case study is a dilemma, a problem that needs to be resolved. The case method is an instructional technique whereby students are exposed to a dilemma and encouraged to develop hypotheses for resolving its central problem. A case study is not a prescription or a list of things for the reader to do. Rather, it represents a description of cognitive features and elements of culture from a particular contextual setting for the reader to make decisions about.

Teaching and learning are complex processes. As our knowledge about teaching continues to grow, preparing teachers to teach cannot be accomplished simply through the presentation of techniques and methods. Preservice teachers, lacking teaching experience, do not know what techniques and methods to assimilate. Additionally, observations of classrooms and teaching behaviors have not proved successful for preparing teachers. Participation in classrooms does not provide prospective teachers with opportunities to make decisions or to understand what making decisions entails. The preservice teacher's schema is not sufficiently developed concerning teaching and learning to support observation/participation as the sole means to learn what a teacher does—make decisions. What is needed is an approach that is cognitively oriented and supports a belief that knowledge is constructed, transformed, and evolving. The approach must begin with the development and acquisition of schemata, knowledge structures, that set the novice apart from the expert (Carter & Doyle, 1987). The approach must go beyond the traditional presentation of declarative knowledge, the "what" of teaching, and procedural knowledge, the "how" of teaching, to incorporate the conditional knowledge of teaching—conditional knowledge that addresses what works when, with what students, under what conditions, and in what settings. The case method can accomplish these goals.

I believe the case method encourages and even forces preservice teachers to think like a teacher. The case method provides students with opportunities to see context specificity of teaching. It also provides context-bound knowledge. Preservice teachers see and are given opportunities to react to scenes and situations they are likely to encounter as they teach. Schemata development is a potent aid to prospective teachers. The case method provides students with opportunities to develop numerous schemata related to teaching. Teachers learn to recognize events, understand the events, and devise sensible and educative ways to make decisions and act. Finally, I also believe the case method allows preservice teachers to consider relevant factors, reflect on alternative approaches, and draw on diverse knowledge from education, thus becoming cognizant of their own preconceptions.

Conclusion

The case study research design and the case method used together can offer reading educators unlimited opportunities to take contextually significant classroom phenomena and use them for instructional purposes. I believe case studies have great potential for preparing reading teachers to deal with dilemmas that have plagued reading teachers for years—grouping, the unmotivated reader, the reader experiencing difficulty, and basal reader instruction to mention just a few.

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An Analysis of Reading Textbooks Used at the College Level

Sondra Rebottini, Patricia K. Smith

Selecting level-appropriate materials in American public schools receives notable attention (Davison, 1988). However, in undergraduate and graduate courses, selecting level-appropriate textbooks receives little consideration, because college professors tend to select reading texts which are available and appear suitable for specific courses. From entrance as undergraduate freshmen to the completion of a doctoral program, students exhibit diverse abilities, experience, knowledge, and education. Higher education professors cannot assume that undergraduate and graduate students can, or should, use texts of the same difficulty interchangeably. Graduate students, possessing more knowledge and experience, should be exposed to more difficult texts with higher readability ratings. Research supports the notion that appropriate and increased readability in textbooks produces expanded comprehensi[illegible]etention, reading speed, and efficiency (Durkin, 1987), which in turn results in greater knowledge.

According to Tyson-Bernstein (1988), textbooks are important to students and disciplines because texts pull together knowledge that is lying around in bits and pieces. Of particular importance to this study is a comment by college professors, reported by Tyson-Bernstein, who stated that "the prose [of textbooks] is dumbed down to accommodate the poorer reading skills of today's undergraduates." Additionally, professors have stated that college textbooks, especially those written for lower division courses, take on too many topics, treating them superficially, have too many unexplained facts and not enough context, have new knowledge piled on rather than assimilated, have special-interest-group messages which appear as snippets of content, have flashy graphics and white space, which further compresses the already compressed text, and seduce professors into being addicted to teacher manuals and ancillary products.

Because research concerning the selection of appropriate texts for college students was lacking, this study was undertaken to determine college reading professors' perceptions regarding texts which are used to teach courses in foundations, elementary, content areas, diagnosis/remediation, clinical reading, and children's literature. Texts reported by professors were classified and ranked within categories for frequency of use at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The levels of text readability were determined by formulas and analyzed to ascertain whether the most widely used college texts were appropriate for the levels being taught. The focus and scope of the research considered the surface structure of text readability and did not deal with subjective factors of individual readers, because instructors place textbook orders long before they have contact with students who will be enrolled in classes. Instructors must rely on their own personal expertise and make professional judgments when selecting reading texts. Currently, the only guideline appears to be content of courses. This has been the traditional method of text selection and appears to be an accepted concept. Professors should go one step further and use readability formulas to measure textbooks, to assure that adopted texts are of appropriate difficulty. According to Klare (1984), formulas selected and properly implemented are helpful screening devices.

Method

Two hundred institutions which grant undergraduate, master, and doctoral degrees in reading were randomly selected and contacted by mail. A reading department chair, coordinator, or a faculty member representing each institution was asked to respond to a written interview and questionnaire. Questions related to all three levels of degrees were presented to determine professors' perceptions through the identification of texts used within specific reading areas. Replies from 70 institutions, 35% return, yielded a sample representing all geographic areas of the United States.

The following reading categories resulted: foundations of reading, elementary, content-area reading, diagnosis/remediation, clinical, and children's literature. Although over 300 textbooks were reported and classified by instructors, a total of 34 surfaced as most frequently used (see appendix). The original intent of the study was to identify and analyze the three most frequently used texts in each category, but it was necessary to vary this number because some categories had one or two books identified while others had up to six books equally ranked.

Readability measures, which were applied after identification of the most frequently used books, involved randomly sampling three 100-word passages from the beginning, middle, and end of each of the 34 books. Because of discrepancies in readability scales, five formulas provided in *School Utilities, Volume 2* (Minnesota Educational Computing Consortium, 1982) were applied to determine surface readability of identified textbooks. Readability measures used were the Dale-Chall Formula, Fry Readability Estimate, Raygor Readability Estimate, Flesch Readability Formula, and Gunning-Fog Readability Formula. A readability level for each passage was obtained and a final score for each text was computed by averaging results of all five formulas (see Table 1). Readability scores of 16.9 or below were designated for the undergraduate level while, scores above 16.9 were classified as graduate.

Discussion

Responses indicated that higher education professors tended to be inconsistent in their definitions of courses as well as in course content. Because of this, textbooks were reported in categories indicated by professors; no attempt was made to align courses and content. Thirty-four texts surfaced as being most frequently used, with some texts being duplicated across levels or reported in more than one category.

Foundations of Reading Textbooks

Frequency and readability levels. Of 18 foundations of reading texts reported at the undergraduate level, all appeared to be within an appropriate readability range. Burns, Roe, & Ross's *Teaching Reading in Today's Elementary Schools*, with a readability of 16.0+, emerged as the most frequently used text, followed equally by Anderson et al. *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (14.6+) and Heilman, Blair, & Rupley's *Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading* (15.9+) (See Table 2). Of 33 books reported at the master's level, Burmeister's *Foundations and Strategies for Teaching Children to Read* (14.5) ranked first, followed by six equally ranked texts, ranging from 13.7 to 17.1+. Five appeared to be more suitable for undergraduates and two appropriate for graduates. Although 11 books were identified at the doctoral level, only one text, *Handbook of Reading Instruction* (17.+), edited by Pearson, was reported used by more than one instructor and appeared to be appropriate for graduate students.

Table 1

Readability Scores of Reading Textbooks by Authors and Formula

Author	Readability Scores						
	Dale-Chall	Fry	Raygor	Flesch	Gunning-Fog	Aver.Range	Range
Alexander	13-15	14	17+*	13-15	15.7	14.5-15.3+	14.9+
Anderson et al.	13-15	13	17+*	13-15	15.1	14.2-15.0+	14.6+
Bond et al.	11-12	12	12	13-15	16.7	12.9-13.5	13.2
Burmeister	13-15	13	13-16	13-15	17	13.8-15.2	14.5
Burns et al.	13-15	14	17+*	16	18.9	15.8-16.2+	16.0+
Dallmann et al.	13-15	16	13-16	16	18	15.2-16.2	15.7
Dechant	13-15	17	17+*	17+	18.5	16.5-16.9+	16.7+
Dechant, Smith	13-15	16	13-16	16	15.8	14.8-15.8	15.3
Durkin '80	11-12	13	12	13-15	16.5	13.1-13.7	13.4
Durkin '83	11-12	15	12	16	18	14.4-14.6	14.5
Ekwall, Shanker '83	11-12	12	12	13-15	17.7	13.1-13.7	13.4
Ekwall, Shanker '85	17+	16	17+*	17+	19.4	17.3+	17.3+
Gillet, Temple	17+	16	17+*	16	17.9	16.8+	16.8+
Gusak	11-12	13	17+*	13-15	15.1	13.8-14.4+	14.1+
Harris, Sipay '84	13-15	12	13-16	12	13.6	13.5-13.9	13.7
Harris, Sipay '85	17+	15	17+*	16	20.3	17.1*	17.1+
Heilman et al.	13-15	16	17+*	16	16.7	15.7-16.1+	15.9+
Herber	17+	15	17+*	16	17.5	16.5+	16.5+

Readability Scores of Reading Textbooks by Authors and Formula

Author	Readability Scores						
	Dale-Chall	Fry	Raygor	Flesch	Gunning-Fog	Aver.Range	Range
Huck	11-12	10	9	11	13.3	10.9-11.1	11.0
Kaluger, Kolson	17+	14	13-16	16	16.9	15.4-16.0+	15.7+
Lapp, Flood	17+	16	13-16	16	17.6	15.9-16.5+	16.2+
Norton	17+	11	11	12	14.4	13.1+	13.1+
Pearson	17+	16	17+*	16	19.5	17.1+	17.1+
Readence et al.	17+	17	17+*	17+	18.8	17.4+	17.4+
Roe et al.	17+	16	17+*	16	18.4	16.9+	16.9+
Rudman	13-15	12	13-16	13-15	16.8	13.6-15.0	14.3
Rupley, Blair	17+	17	17+*	16	16.3	16.7+	16.7+
Smith	13-15	17	13-16	16	17.8	15.4-16.4	16.9+
Spache, Spache	17+	16	17+*	16	18.2	16.9+	16.9+
Sutherland, Arbuthnot	11-12	12	12	13-15	17.6	13.1-13.7	13.4
Vacca '81	17+	16	17+*	16	17.2	16.6+	16.6+
Vacca, Vacca '86	17+	16	17+*	16	16.8	16.6+	16.6+
Wilson, Cleland	17+	17	17+*	17+	17.4	17.1+	17.1+
Zintz	11-12	11	13-16	13-15	16.7	12.9-14.1	13.5

*Number equivalent given to Scientific, Professional, Technical level of readability

Table 2

Readability of College Reading Texts Most Frequently Used
(Listed by author's names in rank order)

Category	Undergrad.	Master	Doctoral
	Readabil./Authors	**Readabil./Authors**	**Readabil./Authors**
Founda	16.0+ Burns et al 14.6 Anderson et al.** 15.9+ Heilman et al.**	14.5 Burmeister 16.0+ Burns et al.** 16.7+ Dechant** 15.3 Dechant, Smith** 17.3+ Ekwall, Shanker '85** 13.7 Harris, Sipay '84** 17.1+ Harris, Sipay '85**	17.1+ Pearson
Elemen	16.0+ Burns et al 14.5 Durkin '83 14.9+ Alexander	13.4 Durkin '80* 17.3+ Ekwall, Shanker '85** 16.0+ Burns et al.** 14.5 Durkin '83** 16.2+ Lapp, Flood** 16.9+ Spache, Spache**	14.9+ Alexander 15.7 Dallmann et al 15.9 Smith
Content Area	16.6+ Vacca, Vacca '86 17.4+ Readence et al 16.9+ Roe et al	16.6+ Vacca '81 16.5+ Herber 17.4+ Readence et al	16.6+ Vacca '81
Diag/Rem	16.8+ Gillet, Temple 14.1+ Guszak** 13.5 Zintz**	13.4 Ekwall, Shanker '83 13.2 Bond et al.** 16.7+ Rupley, Blair**	17.1+ Harris, Sipay '85 17.1+ Wilson, Cleland
Clinical	16.7+ Rupley, Blair 16.8+ Gillet, Temple** 17.1+ Harris, Sipay '85** 15.9+ Heilman et al.** 15.7+ Kaluger, Kolson**	13.4 Ekwall, Shanker '83** 17.1+ Harris, Sipay '85* 13.2 Bond et al	13.2 Bond et al.* 17.1+ Wilson, Cleland*
Ch Lit	13.1+ Norton 11.0 Huck 13.4 Sutherland, Arbuthnot	13.1+ Norton* 14.3 Rudman*	- - - - - - - -

* indicates texts equally ranked first

** indicates texts equally ranked second

Elementary Textbooks

Frequency and readability levels. At the undergraduate level 32 texts were reported with Burns et al. *Teaching Reading in Today's Elementary Schools* (16.0) being identified as the most popular text. This text also ranked first in the foundations category. Durkin's *Teaching Them to Read* (14.5) ranked second, and third was Alexander's *Teaching Reading* (14.9) Readability levels appeared appropriate. Of 30 texts reported at the master's level, two ranked first: Durkin's *Teaching Young Children to Read* (13.4) and Ekwall & Shanker's *Teaching Reading in the Elementary Schools* (17.3+), which was also ranked in the foundations category. Four texts equally shared the next position: Burns et al. book (16.9), a duplication; Durkin's 1983 text (14.5), a duplication; Lapp & Flood's (16.2+); and Spache & Spache's text (16.9+). Again, master's texts were mixed, with four appearing more appropriate for undergraduates and two appropriate at a graduate level. At the doctoral level, three equally ranked texts were reported: Alexander's *Teaching Reading* (14.9+), a duplication; Dallmann et al. *The Teaching of Reading* (15.7); and Smith's *Understanding Reading* (15.9). All three appeared to be appropriate for undergraduates but not difficult enough for advanced graduate students.

Content Area Reading Textbooks

Frequency and readability levels. Of 22 texts identified for undergraduates, Vacca & Vacca's, *Content Area Reading* (16.6+) was reported as most frequently used. The second was Readence, Bean, & Baldwin's *Content Area Reading: An Integrated Approach* (17.4+); and third was Roe, Stoodt, & Burns's *Secondary School Reading Instruction: The Content Areas* (16.9+). One text appeared appropriate for undergraduates and two more suitable for graduate students. Master's professors reported Vacca's 1981 book, *Content Area Reading* (16.6+), as predominant, followed by Herber's *Teaching Reading in Content Areas* (16.5+) and Readence et al. *Content Area Reading. An Integrated Approach* (17.4), a duplication. Again, texts for the master's level were mixed, with two appearing more appropriate for undergraduates and one appropriate for graduate students. Vacca's 1981 text (16.6+), the only one mentioned at the doctoral level, appeared to be more appropriate for undergraduate students.

Diagnosis/Remediation Textbooks

Frequency and readability levels. Undergraduate professors identified 19 texts. Gillet & Temple's *Understanding Reading Problems* (16.8+) ranked first, followed equally by Guszak's *Diagnostic Reading Instruction in the Elementary School* (14.1+) and Zintz's *Corrective Reading* (13.5). All three appeared to be appropriate. Of 20 texts listed for the master's level, Ekwall & Shanker's *Diagnosis and Remediation of the Disabled Reader* (13.4) had the highest ranking, followed equally by Bond, Tinker & Wasson's *Reading Difficulties: Their Diagnosis and Correction* (13.2) and Rupley and Blair's *Reading Diagnosis and Remediation* (16.7+). These master's level texts appeared to be more suitable for undergraduates. Two texts identified at the doctoral level were equally ranked and appeared to have appropriate readability levels: Harris & Sipay's *How to Increase Reading Ability* (17.1+), a duplication, and Wilson & Cleland's text, *Diagnosis and Remediation for Classroom and Clinic* (17.1+).

Clinical Textbooks

Frequency and readability levels. Five of 10 reported clinical texts were identified as most frequently used with undergraduates. Four of the five texts appeared to be appropriate, with the remaining text measuring higher. Rupley & Blair's *Reading Diagnosis and Remediation* (16.7+), a duplication, ranked first. Following and equally ranked were Gillet & Temple's *Understanding Reading Problems* (16.7+), a duplication; Harris & Sipay's *How to Increase Reading Ability* (17.1+), a duplication; Heilman et al. *Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading* (15.9+), a duplication; and Kaluger & Kolson's *Reading and Learning Disabilities* (15.7+).

Three of 21 texts ranked highest at the master's level. The readability was mixed, with one appearing to be appropriate for the graduate level and two appropriate for undergraduates. Sharing first position were Ekwall & Shanker's *Diagnosis and Remediation of the Disabled Reader* (13.4), a duplication, and Harry & Sipay's *How to Increase Reading Ability* (17.1+), a duplication, followed closely by Bond et al. *Reading difficulties: Their diagnosis and correction* (13.2), a duplication. At the doctoral level the two texts used most frequently were equally ranked: Bond et al. (13.2), duplication, and Wilson & Cleland's *Diagnostic and Remedial Reading for Classroom and Clinic* (17.1+), a duplication. One appeared to be appropriate, while the second measured considerably lower for advanced doctoral students.

Children's Literature Textbooks

Frequency and readability levels. The children's literature category appeared to have the fewest texts in print. A total of four books for all degree levels were reported by more than one professor. All four measured low in readability. Three appeared suitable for undergraduates and one for secondary school, but none appeared appropriate for graduate students. The books were reported at the undergraduate level: Norton's *Through the Eyes of a Child* (13.1+) ranked first, Huck's *Children's Literature in the Elementary School* (11.0) was second, and Sutherland & Arbuthnot's *Children and Books* (13.4) ranked third. The researchers doubled the number of samples from the text measuring 11.0 readability but were unable to obtain a higher score. Master's level professors reported two books equally ranking first: Norton's text (13.1+) and Rudman's *Children's Literature: An Issues Approach* (14.3). No textbooks were reported at the doctoral level.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to ascertain college professors' perceptions regarding texts that are used to teach reading courses in foundations, elementary, content areas, diagnosis/remediation, clinical reading, and children's literature. Texts that professors reported were classified and ranked at the undergraduate and graduate levels for frequency of use. Levels of readability were computed and analyzed to determine whether the most widely and frequently used texts were appropriate for the level being taught. Based on responses reported on the questionnaire, the study revealed pertinent information for college professors. Despite a plethora of texts reported in the foundations and elementary categories, a few specific books were used most. No readability pattern emerged to demonstrate that higher education faculty selected textbooks appropriate for the students they teach. The majority of textbooks in the two categories appeared to be most appropriate for undergraduates. Texts suitable for the master's level in all categories were few. Overall, doctoral texts numbered fewest, which may be a result of highly individualized programs at this level. Texts reported in the elementary and content area categories at the doctoral level failed to meet the criterion of readability for advanced graduate students. Duplications across categories indicated that specific courses or areas of reading do not have a common base. For example, Burns et al. text appeared in the foundations and elementary categories at both the undergraduate and master's level. Duplications may have stemmed from a lack of defining foundations courses as either theoretical or practical.

The diagnosis/remediation and clinical categories, which are closely related, understandably had the greatest number of duplications. Some of the duplications occurred across degree levels as well as among categories (see Table 2). Duplications may have occurred because many institutions do not make distinctions between courses which provide the knowledge of diagnosis/remediation skills and clinical courses applying those skills.

Several duplications occurred across degree levels, with Harris & Sipay's 1985 text reported at all three levels. Another duplication included the same Harris & Sipay text, reported in the foundations, diagnosis/remediation, and clinical categories. One perplexing duplication was the presence of Heilman et al. in the clinical as well as foundations category. Duplications across levels and categories appeared to indicate that some college professors use texts which are available but not necessarily suitable for the level or course being taught. Since individual institutions determine course definitions and content, overlap from category to category appears to be less of a concern than duplication of textbooks across degree levels. Regardless of course definition or content, the predominant concern of professors in higher education should be selecting appropriate textbooks which match the advanced abilities and education of graduate students and provide challenging materials.

Conclusions and Implications

The questionnaire revealed that professors adopt textbooks that are readily available. If an appropriate-level text is not available, a text which closely aligns with the course content is selected regardless of the level readability. Readability measures revealed that (a) foundations of reading texts appeared to be suitable for undergraduate and doctoral students but not totally appropriate at the master's level, (b) elementary texts appeared to be most appropriate for undergraduates, although some were used at the master's and doctoral levels, (c) content area books appeared to be most appropriate for master's students, too difficult for undergraduates, but not challenging enough for doctoral students, (d) books categorized as diagnosis/remediation texts were most appropriate for undergraduates, with only two texts being suitable for the graduate level, (e) clinical texts, many of which were duplications, followed the same readability pattern as those used in the diagnosis/remediation category, and (f) children's literature texts, measuring low in readability (with ranges from high school junior level to college sophomore level), were used at the undergraduate and master's levels. Overall, the results of the readability measures indicated that, despite instructors' perceptions, 26 of the 34 most frequently used books appeared appropriate for undergraduates, seven suitable for graduate levels, and one suitable for secondary school level. Fourteen texts were located across degree levels and/or overlapped from category to category. Because college professors' perceptions of the suitability of college reading texts have not received sufficient coverage in periodicals or current research, additional studies need to be undertaken.

Implications of this study indicated that level-appropriate reading textbooks are needed for college and university instruction to avoid the "dumbed down" syndrome. The implications are corroborated by Tyson-Bernstein (1988), who stated that adpoption of college texts is limited by the availability. Because professors are limited to texts which are currently on the market, they should consider using readability scores and colleagues' expertise when they make decisions concerning textbook adoptions for undergraduate and graduate students. Variables within formulas tend to increase or decrease readability levels; therefore, several formulas should be applied to each text and a variety of textbooks should be made available for adoption. If indeed textbooks have been "dumbed down" at the undergraduate level, in all probability the books designated for graduate students are also inferior. Additionally, books having readability scores appropriate for undergraduates are currently being used at the master's and doctoral levels, which only serves to perpetuate and aggravate the problem. Publishing companies need to search for potential authors who have reading expertise, are capable of writing expanded, in-depth textbooks to meet the needs of college students, and are capable of infusing the market with textbooks appropriate for the various levels in reading programs.

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Students' Perceptions of Early Field Experiences in Reading

Sarah Dowhower

In Becoming a Nation of Readers, Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson (1985) suggest there is a core of verified instructional practices that will produce citizens that read with a high level of skill and satisfaction (p. 117). They recommend that good teaching involves (a) devoting more time to comprehension instruction; (b) less emphasis on basal readers and completion of worksheets and dittos; (c) more independent reading; (d) increased opportunities to write; and (e) use of a wider range of higher-quality reading material. However, there is growing evidence that many inservice teachers do not follow these and other reading practices recommended by scholars and supported by current research in the field. Researchers have observed basal-driven and routinized teaching (Blanton & Moormon, 1985b; Duffy & McIntyre, 1982; Durkin, 1978-79; Woodward, 1986); overuse of commercial materials (Anderson, 1984; Mason, 1983; Shannon, 1983, 1987); little opportunity for children to read independently (Anderson, et al., 1985); differentiated instruction of high and low readers (Allington, 1983, 1984; Hiebert, 1983; Mason, 1984); lack of strategic and explicit comprehension instruction (Durkin, 1978-79; Blanton & Moormon, 1985b; Wendler, Samuels & Moore, 1989); little discussion of stories (Mason, 1983); and a dearth of real writing opportunities (Bridge & Hiebert, 1985).

Some educators rightly question the value and use of preservice field experience of cooperating teachers are not congruent with those recommended. Many educators (Blanton & Moormon, 1985a; Evans, 1986; Katz & Cain, 1987; and Zeichner, 1980) argue that universities are doing undergraduate methods students an injustice by encouraging inferior instruction and perpetuating the status quo. In fact, Blanton and Moormon (1985a) suggest that field experiences for prospective classroom teachers of reading "might be described as aiding and abetting the poor classroom reading instruction clearly documented in the observational literature" (p. 56). Katz and Cain (1987) discuss the complaint of insufficient opportunities for students to observe or to experience "good" practices. They suggest that questions of length or amount of practice are irrelevant if the community lacks settings in which trainees can observe "good" practices. They argue that students "do learn from imperfect or 'bad' practices in field placements. However, just what is learned is not clear" (p. 776). Zeichner (1980) suggests that what field experience students *learn* is often "miseducative rather than helpful" (p. 51). Agreeing with Zeichner, Evans (1986) argues that classroom teachers exercise a particular influence on early field experience (EFE) students because the teachers represent what "experienced teachers do" and "may be the first teachers students observe from the other side of the desk. Consequently, the existence of poor teaching models poses a very serious problem" (p. 45)

Related Reading Research

Although often referred to in the literature, "the apparent gulf between educators of teachers and practitioners in field settings has. . . not been studied empirically" (Katz & Cain, 1987). However, several descriptive studies have been reported that are related to that concern (Blair, 1978; McMillan, 1987; Becher & Ade, 1982; Hodges, 1982; and Daves, Morton & Grace, 1990). At the heart of the issue is the degree of influence exerted by the cooperating teacher and the perceived environment of the school.

Reviewing the research, Ervay (1985) concludes that the influence of the cooperative teacher far outweighs any educational program at the college level, and when goals of campus and field collide, teacher-education efforts before student teaching are "effectively eliminated" (p. 37).

In a study specifically addressing the influence of reading-methods courses, Blair (1978) reached the same conclusion. In a case study of four student teachers she found that the teaching practices of the cooperating teacher were often different from those advocated in the reading methods course and that actual classroom experiences had a greater effect on reading practices than reading-method courses. "Conditions in the practicum classroom were so overwhelming that students quickly changed many of their beliefs, values, and teaching practices related to reading instruction" (p. 7288a).

In a more recent case study, McMillan (1987) found that only one of four elementary students in a reading/language arts EFE was able to consistently implement content taught in the reading methods course taken concurrently. This content included appropriate planning, explicit stating of purpose of instruction, comprehension-strategy development, and materials selection. McMillan concluded that "although the content of the reading methods course influenced preservice teachers' planning and implementation of reading instruction, the extent of influence was mediated by several identifiable variables" (pp. 126-127). These variables involved influence of the cooperating teacher, the curricular demands of the school, the students' own histories, communication between college instructors and cooperating teachers, and emphasis placed on classroom-management issues. The attitudes, behaviors, and practices of the cooperating teacher and the school environment seemed critical in bridging the gap between course content and field classroom.

In contrast, two studies (Becher & Ade, 1982; Hodges, 1982) show that the presence of the good practices of a cooperating teacher during field experiences may not be as important as many would argue. Becher and Ade (1982) found the presence of "good practice" had a low relationship to a student's performance at the end of (a) 100 hours of EFE, (b) junior student teaching—half-day, eight weeks, and (c) senior student teaching—full-day, eight weeks. In other words, the mere presence of a good model was not related to students' performance. The authors propose several possible reasons for this: (a) observation is not as useful as deliberate modeling and demonstration followed by guided practice, (b) students perceived the field experiences not as situations in which they were to learn good pedagogy but as ones in which they were to develop and practice the pedagogy that had been taught them on campus, or (c) supervisors may have communicated to the students that the field experiences were opportunities for students to develop and practice good pedagogy, not to imitate their cooperating teachers (pp. 28-29).

Hodges (1982) suggests that teacher educators have been too quick to blame the cooperating teachers for many of the poor teaching practices seen in student-teaching situations. She studied five student teachers in charge of 15 third and fourth graders for a semester without a cooperating teacher. Her findings showed that "even preservice teachers who do not have a cooperating teacher often act in ways that are dissonant with views they espoused immediately after taking a reading methods." And, in some cases, they even change their views toward reading instruction. Much of the reading group was spent in round robin reading; independent reading only was done if something did not run over into its allotted 20 minutes; attempts to organize literature groups, integrate social studies, and individualize reading floundered; and reading group membership never changed during the semester.

Daves, Morton, & Grace (1990) like Hodges, found evidence that what is taught on campus is not practiced in the field. Daves et al., report that even when there is a strong emphasis on recommended practices (e.g., language experience, writing, children's literature, and free silent reading) in university reading courses, first year teachers are not using these practices. Their reading instruction time is spent using basal readers and workbooks. These practices were not cultivated in their undergraduate reading courses (p. 27). The novice teachers perceive that for administrators, teachers, and parents in their schools, the basal approach is more important to implement than those practices advocated at the university.

Student Perceptions

While we have some data on novice teachers' perceptions, few studies have been reported on students' perceptions of early field experiences and match or mismatch of university training. Goodman (1985) and Lasley & Applegate (1984) report a gap in the literature as to students' perceptions of the realities that confront them in the classroom.

In a study of characteristic problems encountered by 272 pre-student teachers in early field experiences (EFEs), Lasley & Applegate (1985) found that students "could see little relationship between methods-course content (what a faculty member told them should be done) and classroom experiences. Indeed, many field students found that they disagreed with the management tactics and instructional strategies of their cooperating teachers" (p. 225).

In line with the concern that reading field experiences may be inconsistent with what students are taught on campus and in view of the lack of data on EFEs in reading, the purpose of the study was to gather and analyze preservice students' perceptions of reading instruction practices during a 2-week field experience before student teaching.

The Study

The Present study reports the perceptions of 155 EFE elementary education majors who were in one of six sections of a reading methods course taught by the author at a midwestern university. Two sections took the course in spring of 1987, two in fall of 1987, and two in spring of 1988. In addition to being overwhelmingly female (males = 4; females = 173), students were juniors or seniors who had not yet completed a semester of student teaching. While there was some variation in age, ethnic background, and economic level, most students were between the ages of 20 to 25, Caucasian, and middle class. In the 16-week methods block semester, each student spent 12 weeks taking five elementary methods courses and four weeks participating in early field experiences in the public schools (20 full days). The four weeks were divided into two separate EFEs, usually at different grade levels and at different schools. For many of the students, these two EFEs were their first extended experience in an elementary classroom as a teaching participant. The goal of the EFE program as stated to the cooperating teachers by the university Department of Teacher Education was to give the students an opportunity to work with children in classrooms prior to student teaching. Since most of the students' observation requirements were met in previous courses, they were ready to be *active* participants by teaching lessons to small or large groups, tutoring, or monitoring tests.

The students were placed in urban, suburban, rural, and small-town schools within a 60-mile radius of the college campus. The cooperating teacher assignments were made on a voluntary basis and usually by the school principal.' The university requires no supervision course for a teacher to participate. College-level supervision was restricted to brief weekly visits to each student by a methods instructor with no observation of the student's teaching. However, the program was a "structured school experience" in that students had four to eight assignments to be completed for each of the five methods courses. Specifically for reading methods, the students were required to administer two individual informal inventories and teach five small-group lessons over the two field experiences (one language experience lesson, one word recognition lesson, one vocabulary development strategy such as semantic mapping, semantic feature analysis, or word mapping, and two comprehension strategy lessons using either story mapping, directed reading/thinking activity, experience/text-relationship, or a visual structure.).

The data reported here are responses at the end of three consecutive semesters to an open-ended final examination question asking each student to describe and evaluate the classroom reading instruction in one of their two-week field experiences. For each semester, the last course requirement before the final was to read *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (Anderson, et al., 1985), and discuss "the verified practices of the best teacher in the best schools . . . throughout the country" (p. 120).

Method of Analysis

In total 177 responses to the final examination question were analyzed using the grounded theory approach of qualitative analysis first advanced by Glaser and Stauss (1986) and further developed by Parker & Gehrke (1986). This method is an "inductive system for generating interrelated hypotheses grounded, or based, in data. In general, before hypotheses are defined, data are collected, coded, analyzed, and arranged into theoretical categories by their properties. Then the categories and properties are analyzed to develop working hypotheses" (Parker & Gehrke, 1986, p. 228). Using constant comparative analysis, the study had five phases: (a) comparison of incidents and generation of categories—induced from the data, not created prior to their inspection; (b) comparison of incidents within emerging categories to better define attributes and properties of the categories; (c) integration of categories and properties; (d) refinement of emerging theory; and (e) construction of hypotheses grounded in the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1976; Parker & Gehrke, 1986). Coding and analysis was done by two graduate students who were inservice elementary teachers and also by the author.

Generation of Categories. As Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest, perceived similarities and differences evolved quickly in the first inspection of the data. Four general categories of responses were identified: (a) students with positive reactions to the reading instruction they saw; (b) students with negative reactions; (c) student with both positive and negative reactions; and (d) students who just described the reading instruction and did not evaluate what they saw.

In the second inspection of the three semesters of data, each coder independently classified each response into one of the four categories. When the two graduate-student coders disagreed, agreement was reached by the vote of a third, independent coder, the author. Twenty-two responses fell into this last category. The fourth category and responses were dropped from further analysis because the students were asked both to describe and evaluate classroom reading instruction. A total of 155 student responses remained for the second phase of the study.

Properties of the Categories. In the second round of analysis, the coders looked for specific reasons each response was judged in one of the three categories—in other words, factors to further define the three categories. For the first category (positive reactions), 32 different reasons were identified. In the second category (negative responses), 36 different reasons were identified, and in the third (mixed reactions), 31.

Integration of Data. In the third phase of analysis, the properties were collapsed and integrated in order to make some sense of their meaning.

Relationships between the three categories were also explored. For example, the use of a basal reading approach was a factor mentioned in both positive and negative responses. However, positive response students cited a flexible usage of basals along with other approaches, while negative response students listed routinized and inflexible usage of the basal reading series.

Refinement. As the third phase evolved, several propositions emerged. Properties of little relevance in each category were set aside so that more relevant ones could be brought in clearer focus (see Parker & Gehrke, 1986, p. 232). Integration of the salient properties of each category began to tell a story of the reading instruction the students saw and experienced in the school classrooms.

Hypotheses. Glaser & Strauss (1967) claim that the resulting theories or hypotheses are envisioned "as an ever-developing entity, not as a perfect product" (p. 32). Three hypotheses emerged from the analysis of the perceptions and observations of the pre-service students. These hypotheses are presented here, not as perfect hypotheses but as invitations for further study of the gap between reading-methods course content and the realities of the reading instruction in elementary school classrooms.

Results

Categories Identified. As shown in Table 1, 28 out of 155 students (18.1 percent) rated their reading field experience as positive—instruction that they would emulate or that they perceived as exemplary. One student wrote, "My second field experience was ideal. My teacher ran not only her reading groups but her entire class the way I dream of teaching some day!" Other positive responses by students were as follows:

Table 1

Overall Evaluation of the Reading Instruction in a Two-Week Early Field Experience by 155 Preservice Teachers

Ratings of Reading Instruction	Teachers	Percentage
Positive	28	18.1
Negative	84	54.2
Positive/Negative	43	27.7

"I agreed with my teacher's practice of discussion and the use of open-ended questions. She allowed the students to share their own stories and experiences as related to what was read."

"My cooperating teacher organized her classroom for reading much like the way I hope to organize my own. She used a very wholistic approach. The students read tradebooks three days a week. These were individual student's choice. The other two days they spent working on a selected story in the basal—this is discussed as a class. They were required to write a reaction to what was read in their individual literature logs . . . Workbooks were seldom used except to reinforce skills to enhance comprehension."

"In my first field in first grade, Mrs. C. used various methods. She used basal readers, but only twice a week. This was more to satisfy the parents. But the other days she had interest groups. For these groups she had them go to the library and check out books about their interests. In group the children said their ideas on their interests and she wrote them down on a large sheet of paper. This is what the children actually read. Also, the children wrote their own books and published them—some big books."

Syntheses of data showed flexible use of basals, use of centers, tradebooks, individualized reading, small groupings by ability, other forms of grouping, and encouragement of writing and independent reading as major reasons for identifying classroom reading program and exemplary.

The majority of students (54.2 percent) expressed negative reactions to their two-week reading experience—instruction they would not emulate. Students reported the following:

> "I will teach reading very differently from what I saw in the field and from how I was taught. . . . I saw total reliance on the basal . . . with not much outside reading or varied instructional practices."

> "Of the two weeks [in my field experience], the students read ONE day. The rest of the time was spent on workbook pages, dittos and instruction of skills."

> "Some of the points I noted in the field and would not do in my own classroom were (1) round-robin reading, (2) extensive use of workbook pages and dittoes . . . and (3) the same routine everyday—read, discuss for a minute, and do workbook pages."

> "The entire class (28-30) would read a story and then they were given worksheets or dittos to complete on the story. There was no pre-

discussion ever, and hardly a discussion after the reading of the story."

"Her class rarely read a tradebook, not even during free time. She had [the library books] kept in the locker!"

"My teacher taught the low kids [in the whole grade]. She expected little from them, so it should not have surprised her when they only worked to achieve the bare minimum requirements."

"The teacher I had organized her reading instruction by large group teaching! Can you believe it? Twenty-four students in one group and three others who worked on their own. I think that second graders need much more individual attention and should be on the level appropriate for them, not what's good for the majority."

Syntheses of data showed the three major complaints of the 84 students to be (a) the overuse of workbooks and worksheets (b) reliance on basals for reading instruction, and (c) predominance of large-group and whole-class reading instruction.

Connected to the use of basals were negative reactions concerning (a) the strict following of manuals by teachers (b) the amount and frequency of round-robin oral reading, (c) the boredom of many of the students with the monotonous basal routines of instruction, (d) heavy use of large-group instruction with the basal, and (e) prevalence of homogeneous grouping across a grade level.

Over 27% of the students had both negative and positive reaction to their reading EFE. The students affirmed many of the reading practices they saw, but disapproved of others. For example, one student wrote, "I agreed with the fact that [the teacher] had small reading groups and that she had a special reading table to meet with them in the front of the room. However, I feel she could have done a lot more with the kids in the reading groups by working more with vocabulary development, using [comprehension] strategies like directed reading-thinking and story mapping. She should have had more discussion and asked higher level questions."

While properties of this third category were difficult to integrate and synthesize, the major complaints were the same as those in the negative category: overuse of workbooks and worksheets, basal, and large-group instruction. Use of tradebooks, small-group instruction, story extension, and story discussion were reported as positive elements of the reading program.

Hypotheses Generated from Data

Three hypotheses grounded in the data were developed:

#1 Hypothesis. The majority of pre-service students sent into elementary school classrooms for an early field experience perceive the reading instruction and organization they observe to be contradictory to what they are taught in their reading method class at the university.

#2 Hypothesis. Students see the reality of the elementary school classroom as basal readers. Very few teachers use such other types of instruction as integration tradebooks, language experience, or other whole-language approaches.

#3 Hypothesis. Students experience large group (en masse) reading instruction as a practice as common as the traditional small group instruction of three or more groups. This practice seems indifferent to individual needs and levels. Even when teachers group homogeneously across grade level (a common practice in the area), students saw most teachers instructing the whole class as one reading group and ignoring individual differences.

Summary and Discussion

Using the constant comparative technique, 177 elementary students' responses to a final examination question were categorized to evaluate their perceptions of the classroom reading program in one 2-week EFE. Three categories (155 student responses) were identified as relevant to this study and properties of these categories were further analyzed. Three hypotheses based on the data were generated reflecting the gulf between educators of teachers and practitioners: (a) discrepancy between what is taught and what is experienced, (b) basal readers as the reality of reading instruction, and (c) en masse reading instruction, oblivious to individual needs and levels.

Patterns of classroom instruction reported by the majority of students to support these three grounded hypotheses were as follows:

1. Little variation in reading approach, with overuse of the basal series, over reliance on worksheets and workbooks, and teachers tied to basal manuals;

2. Heavy use of the basal teaching sequence (i.e., read, answer questions, do workbooks or worksheets);

3. Large-group instruction as prevalent as the traditional three or more small-group teaching;

4. High incidence of homogeneous grouping by grade, with subsequent large group teaching; and

5. Heavy use of round-robin reading.

Implicit (and sometimes explicit) in these descriptions of heavy basal and large-group-oriented classroom reading instruction are some assumptions concerning the dearth of several highly recommended practices. Preservice teachers saw

1. Few comprehension strategies being taught;

2. Writing experiences not an integral part of the reading program; and

3. Little opportunity for independent reading or reading for enjoyment.

In sum, student responses in this study seem to verify poor classroom practices that reading researchers have documented in observational studies cited earlier in the paper. In addition, the students' perceptions underscore a critical dilemma faced by reading educators: in many EFEs, students feel they are *not observing* what scholars in reading education are recommending as appropriate practices and what many instructors in university classrooms are *teaching*.

Facilitating Program-to-Field Consistency

How can educators address this theory-practice gulf? The most expedient and immediate way is through course content that acknowledges the conflict and prepares students to deal with it reflectively. The most effective and lasting way is through major institutional changes that facilitate program-to-field consistency. (For a more detailed explanation of each recommendation see Dowhower, 1988).

University Educator Initiatives

In some ways individual faculty initiatives may be "band-aid" solutions; however, they allow the reading educator to address the dilemma and frustrations immediately—before, during and after field experiences. Below are four strategies the author has found effective:

Explore Teacher Constraints. Discuss with students the constraints under which elementary teachers operate. Help them to understand the reasons it is so difficult for teachers to follow their beliefs about good teaching. The works of Shavelson & Stern (1981), Simpson, Ratekin, &

Alvermann (1986), Duffy & Roehler (1986), and Shannon (1987) speak strongly to teacher-constraint issues and are excellent to incorporate into reading course content.

Prepare Students for the Dilemmas. When methods students are aware of the contradictions and the gulf between what they learn in college and what they see in the field, it is much easier for them to deal with the incongruity. Encourage students to perceive EFEs as chances to develop and practice the pedagogy taught to them on campus and to look for examples of good practices. Structure the field practicum to prepare students for the dilemma and at the same time to facilitate a more even-quality experience for each student. Make field assignments that encourage observation of the match or mismatch of theory and practice. Encourage students to test out recommended practices against the realities of the classroom.

Give Alternatives to Inappropriate Reading Practices. Prepare students by giving alternatives to inappropriate practices. Show students how to fit theory to the real demands of the classroom. As Goodman (1986) argues, "help students learn strategies for creating freedom with the constraints . . ." (p. 121). Suggest alternatives for round-robin oral reading, creative uses of basal readers, and viable substitutes for workbook and worksheets.

Provide Models within the Methods Course. Use videotapes and direct instructor modeling as ways of facilitating reflective and inquiry-oriented modes of thinking and providing examples of "good" models. Live modeling in the university class is particularly powerful, in that the technique allows the novice to learn the teacher's intentions, goals, and rationales for activity selection and sequence. Microteaching provides an additional opportunity for learning. Students observe model teaching, then have a chance to practice the behaviors in a less complex environment than in the field.

Institutional Initiatives

While individual educators can make some difference, the best way to gain consistency in campus and field is by making major changes at the university level. These changes need to involve development of an inquiry-oriented curriculum, the selection and training of cooperating teachers, and the forging of closer communications between campus and field.

Inquiry-Oriented Curriculum. Zeichner (1981) argues that the goal of field-based experiences should be the development of reflective teachers and that an inquiry-oriented curriculum will foster a critical orientation toward both teaching and the context surrounding it (Zeichner & Teitelbaum, 1982). Without this program thrust at the university level, the educator/practitioner gap cannot be closed, because the commonly used apprenticeship model may do little more than perpetuate established patterns of teaching (Zeichner, 1981) and may actually inhibit the range of teaching practices and creative and intellectual involvement in the curriculum (Goodman, 1985).

Quality Placement. Secondly, the issue of quality placement has too long been neglected in EFEs. There is increasing documentation of the importance of careful selection of cooperating teachers for EFEs (Blair, 1978; Evans, 1986). However, most institutions provide orientation but little or no training for cooperating teachers in pre-student teaching experiences (Heath & Cyphert, 1985; Kay & Ishler, 1980). The selection and training of teachers should be as important in EFEs as in student teaching.

Campus/Field Communication and Program Reforms. Another solution to the campus/field dilemma is increased communication between cooperating teacher, college supervisor, and methods instructor. Often the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor are unaware of the content and goals of each methods course. McMillan (1987) found that supervisors' comments to students in EFE were content- and context-free, and rarely addressed the notion of "good" reading practices.

Below are four innovative projects that have potential for increasing communication between educators and practitioners:

(1) a computer data bank of important content and goals of each methods course, available to students, cooperating teachers and supervisors (see MacCims Project, Perry, 1988);

(2) an immersion-type EFE in which reading courses are taught in the practicum school with the help of the school staff (see Gipe, Duffy & Richards, 1987);

(3) "in house" teaching experience, where classes of students are brought to the university for small group instruction (see Wellington, 1986); and

(4) a cadre of clinical classrooms established in the public schools to facilitate observation, participation, and research (see Cohen, Arends & Murphy, 1987, and Allen, 1990).

Conclusion

Implicit in the discussion of solutions to the campus/field dilemma is the issue of inservice training or re-training of reading teachers. Both Blair (1978) and Hodges (1982) conclude from their research that instruction in teaching of reading should be a *continual process*, extending from early field experiences through student teaching and on into inservice teaching. As Joyce & Clift (1984) suggest, it is important for novice teachers to witness their own education along with the continuing re-education of the personnel training them.

When this happens—when college reading educators can train preservice students in an atmosphere of ongoing learning and inquiry—novice teachers will more readily explore teacher constraints, test recommended practices against the realities of the classroom, attack the mismatch between theory and practice, and observe and establish a repertoire of good teaching practices. In addition, the university can better implement an inquiry-oriented curriculum, assign quality placements and obtain closer union of schools and university—what Goodlad (1988) calls a symbiotic partnership, where "schooling and teacher education improve simultaneously" (p. 109).

Whatever the solutions to the campus/field dissonance, reading educators cannot provide quality training for preservice teachers until that dissonance is resolved. Two students in this study put the problem very simply. One wrote, "I think there are so many neat ways that we know to teach reading now. It is a shame that not more of those strategies are being used." The other, "In my methods class, I learned so many different ways to teaching reading. The sad thing was that I saw very little of them in the field."

Notes

[1] For purpose of clarification, the term *early field experience student* refers to an elementary-education university undergraduate who is fulfilling practicum requirements in a public or private school classroom prior to student teaching; *pupil* refers to an elementary school child being taught; and *instructor* refers to university and reading-education facilities. *Student teachers* refer to university elementary education undergraduate students who have completed all early field experiences and are enrolled in a semester of classroom teaching under supervision of a cooperating teacher and college supervisor.

[2] No cooperating teacher had more than one EFE student in the three semester of data gathering.

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Reaction and Resolution: Response to Dowhower

Allen Berger

I have mixed feelings about Sarah's excellent paper. On the one hand, she identifies a problem that apparently exists in the schools she sampled; on the other hand, excellent teaching of reading and writing does exist in many schools.

Her data are collected by college students still rather wet behind their proverbial ears, with no proof provided as to the accuracy of their perceptions, while at the same time no opportunity is given to cooperating teachers to express their perceptions of the future teachers.

These feelings/reactions do not in any way detract from Sarah's fine study, in that they go beyond its present scope and point the way to the future.

Along the way we might consider the following in light of the fact that, in general, the best teaching tends to occur in elementary schools, the next best in secondary schools, and the worst in colleges/universities.

- Colleges and universities can improve teaching by increasing contact with excellent elementary and secondary school teachers through exemplary inter-exchange programs, such as the one in Boulder, CO.

- Conferences, workshops, and publications can be developed to encourage the exchange of ideas between and among teachers, principals, and professors.

- Students in elementary and secondary schools, and in colleges and universities often make thoughtful comments to improve education when invited to do so in small groups and panels. (Some schools invite elementary and secondary school students to participate on textbook-selection committees.)

- Mechanisms for school teachers/principals to inform college professors/researchers instead of the other way around can be built into the educational network.

When all else fails, schools/colleges/universities might consider the creation of The Loyal Opposition, a small group of teachers/professors whose responsibility it is to ask relevant questions about the educational rationales for decisions/actions of the administration—similar to the important responsibility of the Official Loyal Opposition, the party that receives the second highest number of votes, which is an integral part of the governments of Israel as well as Canada and other countries in the British Commonwealth.

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On Seeking Certitude Through Certification

Wayne Otto, Bernard L. Hayes, Kay Camperell, Linda Vavrus and Mary Heller

Introduction

Almost any serious consideration of ways to improve reading instruction—or, as the 1989 conference theme put it, to ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE IN READING—will come around, eventually, to matters related not only to the initial education but also to the assurance of informed performance of reading teachers. In the parlance of our profession such discussions usually turn out to address issues of licensure and certification. (In everyday usage these terms tend to be used interchangeably; yet, I think that for most of us *certification* carries a bit more positive and professional affect than plain-and-simple *licensure*. Whether there is—or *should* be or *could* be—reason for that affect is one issue that we address in this paper.)

Thinking that includes licensure/certification in consideration of ways to pursue excellence in teaching reading seems to go like this: First, everybody knows that people who perform important services MUST be licensed to practice. Plumbers, barbers, airline pilots, proctologists—all must have a license, and all face severe penalties for practicing without it. Licensing is presumed to assure some minimum level of competency by practitioners; it exists to protect us from abuse by the incompetent. Second, it follows that because teachers perform an important service, they, too should be licensed in order to protect others from incompetence. And third, the only possible conclusion to a line of thinking that starts where this one does and that continues as this one has must be *that* *toughening up licensure/certification requirements is an effective way to assure excellence in reading instruction.*

Unfortunately, such a line of thinking may be flawed in a number of ways. Most of us can cite instances where licensing has failed to protect us from water damage, haircuts like Moe's—or was it Larry's—rough landings and icy fingers. But our purpose here isn't to quibble about the underlying assumptions. Like it or not, the licensing/certification of teachers is a fact of life.

Our purpose here, then, is to (1) examine present and proposed practices in the licensing/certification of reading teachers, (2) take note of the practical limitations of these well-intended practices, and (3) suggest at least one alternative to the traditional course-taking route to licensure/certification. Models are already in place at several levels:

- at the state level, where there is a long history and tradition of teacher-licensing by state departments of public instruction;

- at the professional organization level, where the organizations set standards and procedures for special certification;

- at the national level, where there is a tradition of board examinations for professions such as medicine, architecture and accounting.

Each level has its folkways, traditions and *advocates*. At the *state level*, advocates tend to be departments of public instruction, state legislatures, and, presumably, at least some of the concerned public. Most states offer some form of "special" licensure/certification for reading teachers (in addition to the "regular classroom" types). At the *professional organization level*, there has been support for a special certification program to be administered by the International Reading Association. And at the *national level* the efforts that most clearly address the concerns of reading educators are those being developed of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.

In the sections that follow, we first examine the characteristics of (a) existing licensure/certification programs in the various states and (b) a proposed certification program considered by the International Reading Association. The rather severe limitations of these programs are pointed out. Then we examine the approach of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, paying particular attention to ways in which limitations of the state and professional organization programs might be addressed. Finally, we offer suggestions as to how the American Reading Forum might be involved in a positive way in re-thinking and, perhaps, restructuring the ways teachers are "certified" as special teachers of reading.

State Certification in Reading

State departments of education have established minimum criteria for certification of reading teachers that colleges are required to implement and follow in their preparation of these professions. Variances between states exist, but when one reviews different state reading certification requirements, some common factors appear. Much of the commonality may be based on states' seeking to comply with national standards set by groups such as the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC). The purpose of NASDTEC is to exercise leadership in matters relating to the preparation and certification of professional school personnel. However, such organizations also insist that each state is responsible for its own certification requirements. According to the NASDTEC, each state has exclusive responsibility for the quality and content of professional/certification programs in that state. This responsibility may be vested in or shared by the State Education Agency, a State Standards Commission or a State Board of Education. NASDTEC contends that, regardless of title, the state agency is the only legally accountable agency in matters concerning approval/accreditation of programs.

The issue of state prerogatives and independence often arises when national or regional accreditation is considered. The NASDTEC takes the strong position that each state examines and affirms its policy concerning certification standards and procedures. They suggest that while national and regional standards facilitate inter-state reciprocity and contribute to quality control, they can also stifle differences and hamper creative programming, as well as infringe upon the authority of the state. The NASDTEC sees its challenge and concern as maintaining each state's prerogatives and independent identity while permitting program uniqueness, encouraging flexibility, ensuring quality, and *providing a basis for reciprocity.*

In theory there is much that can be said for this position concerning reading certification at the state level; however, in reality the practice of each state's determining its unique reading certification requirements leaves much to be desired. With each state doing its own thing, what one finds regarding requirements for certification is often confusing and contradictory. An examination of each state's certification requirements reveals vast differences in what is expected of the reading professional. The 1988 Manual on Certification and Preparation of Educational Personnel in the United States, which is reported to "be the most comprehensive compilation of data on teacher preparation and licensing ever produced," identifies the requirements of each state that offers specialized certification for those who teach corrective or remedial reading. The manual notes that there are seventeen states that require such certification—usually in the form of endorsements to basic certificates. Each of these seventeen states reports vastly different requirements, ranging from requiring as little as a bachelor's degree with special methods in reading to requiring a master's degree plus three years of teaching experience. What appears to be a common thread among all state requirements is the reliance on *course work*—or competencies that are in turn translated into courses by universities—as the major, or only, demonstration of "competencies" to be certified. There also appears to be some confusion as to which states require certification of reading professionals. For example, Wisconsin and Georgia are not identified in the 1988 manual as having certification in this area. However, both these states are reported elsewhere to have reading-specialist certification requirements. When we examine certification at the state level, the lack of consistency from state to state and the defacto reliance on course work leave much to be desired. One is left with the impression that identifying specific reading certification requirements in a given state is impossible. Getting certified in a state might depend on who you talked to on a given day of the week.

A Professional Proposal for Certification

IRA has developed a set of guidelines that could serve as standards for licensure/certification of reading specialists. The guidelines were developed by an IRA Advisory Group on Certification (1986) to describe (a) the various roles and responsibilities of reading specialists (e.g., diagnostic/remedial specialist, developmental-reading/study-skills specialist) and (b) the knowledge (i.e., course work) and competencies associated with each role. The guidelines currently are used in NCATE evaluation of teacher-education programs and could be used by local and state agencies for licensing reading specialists.

The Advisory Group (1988), however, suggests that IRA Certification should be a voluntary process by which experienced teachers are recognized for achieving standards established by the profession that exceed those needed to acquire a state teaching license. Ostensibly, IRA certification would carry no "official weight" but would provide recognition by IRA that an individual has achieved advanced or specialized skill, knowledge, and experience about reading instruction that goes beyond state licensure standards.

The process would involve documentation of experience and course work specified in the Guidelines. There are six proposed requirements:

1. A minimum of five years of experience in the area of certification.
2. An undergraduate degree from an accredited institution.
3. A specified number of graduate credits in the area of certification.
4. A minimum 3.0 grade-point average in the required courses.
5. Evidence of professional leadership.
6. Evidence of additional educational experience.

A basic argument for the proposed certification program (Reading Today, 1988) is that professional standards will be imposed from other organizations (e.g., National Board for Professional Standards) if IRA, the leading professional organization in reading, does not develop its own. Other discussions range from how the program could strengthen the leadership role of IRA (e.g., increase IRA's leadership role in local, state, and national reading efforts) to ways the program could influence teacher education by making required course work in reading conform to the Guidelines.

A basic argument against the proposed program is that the process relies on course work and grades to evaluate professional development. Completion of graduate reading courses and good grades, however, do not necessarily reflect professional growth or improved reading instruction (Wendler, Samuels & Moore, 1989). One has to assume that the Guidelines are valid, because there is no way to test their validity. Moreover, there is much controversy and a wide range of opinion about what constitutes effective reading instruction and how to educate reading teachers effectively. Another important argument against use of the Guidelines is that once the Guidelines and standards are set there could be vested interest by IRA and other agencies to use the standards dogmatically and to maintain them rather than to support continued research and debate about the nature of reading processes as well as how to improve teaching performance and reading instruction in schools.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; Is national certification the answer?

Thus far, we have described several initiatives underway in recent years to enhance the professional status of literacy professionals. The lack of consistency in states; approaches to certification, particularly for reading/language arts specialists, coupled with the reluctance of the nation's leading professional organization in the literacy area, the International Reading Association, to become involved beyond the publication of its Guidelines, raises the possibility that setting standards for certification will continue to be a *laissez faire* proposition in this country. Further, even for most of the proposed initiatives from states and the IRA there continues to be a reliance on tried and true, contrived methods of demonstrating competence—course work in the field and/or performance on some sort of standardized achievement test.

There is another initiative in process pursuing a quite different strategy to recognize exemplary teaching. *The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards* has proposed a voluntary assessment program of professional recognition and certification beyond state licensure for exemplary, experienced teachers. In the context of the Board's work, *certification* is viewed as something awarded after obtaining one's entry license into the profession. This section describes the approach of the National Board and considers how it might offset some of the limitations confronting state and professional organizations in this area.

The National Board was formed in 1986, as a response to reform initiatives proposed by the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession (*A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*, 1986) and other educational groups (American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, 1987; The Holmes Group, 1986). It is a nongovernmental, nonprofit organization of 64 elected members, *the majority of whom are active elementary and secondary classroom teachers*. Other members represent school administrators, school boards, teacher educators, business and public interest groups. Committed to reforms within the profession by teachers and for teachers, this organization is establishing mechanisms to enhance the status of teaching as a profession. Its goals are to define "high and rigorous" national performance standards for what teachers should know and be able to do, to develop an assessment program that would certify teachers who met those standards of exemplary practice, and to engage in other reform activities that will enhance the professional status of teachers and, thus, improve student learning (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989).

The Board has several items on its agenda: confirming the excellence of exemplary teachers at all levels of practice and in a variety of subject matter areas, strengthening the staff development opportunities at the school site, and setting new norms for teacher assessment. Its most significant and formidable task is development of a voluntary assessment process for professional certification, analogous to procedures in professions like law, accounting, architecture and medicine.

At this time, the NBPTS has two prerequisites a teacher would have to meet to qualify for the Board's assessment for certification: (1) acquisition of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution and (2) successful completion of three years of teaching at the elementary or secondary levels (NBPTS, 1989).

The Board intends that its program of national certification would publicly acknowledge that teaching is a complex and demanding profession. To do so the Board plans that its assessment be multidimensional in terms of the knowledge and skills used in authentic teaching and that it also employ multiple methodologies: simulated performances in assessment centers, on-site documentation through portfolios, interviews, and observations, and multiple-choice and essay examinations (NBPTS, 1989). Thus, the Board's certification process will demonstrate a commitment to the concrete assessment of competencies demonstrated in actual classroom practice, as well as to the abstract evaluation of knowledge about subject matter and teaching.

The Board has developed a long-range plan to phase in certification in five developmental categories, spanning early childhood education through young adult education (Pre K-12). While it will be possible for elementary teachers to obtain generalist certificates at two of these levels (involving Pre K-6), specialized areas for certificates have been identified, beginning at the Middle-Childhood/Early-Adolescence level (grades 4-9) NBPTS, 1989, pp. 45-51).

The Board's current plans call for the first phases of its certification program to be operating by 1993. It is currently soliciting proposals from research and development groups interested in developing the assessment program for the first certificate, to be issued in "English Language Arts" at the "Middle Childhood and Early Adolescence (Grades 4-9)" developmental level. This may mean that reading specialists, as well as classroom teachers strong in the reading/language arts areas, will be able to volunteer for certification in the next few years.

Is the National Board the answer? As with just about anything in education these days—it depends. The National Board has no intention of competing with states in the licensure business. Instead, they intend that their voluntary certification program for experienced teachers

> complement, not replace, state systems of mandatory licensure for beginning teachers. State licensing systems set minimal standards to protect the public interest and to assure that a teacher will do no harm. Professional certification takes the next step, to provide assurance of high-quality practice (NBPTS, 1989, p. 2).

The National Board has gone on record as emphasizing to states and school districts that it is their responsibility to determine how best to use National Board Certification to promote the improvement of professional practice in their contexts. This stance raises some questions of equity between those districts that might be better able to afford Board-certified teachers and those that would not be able to compete financially to attract certified teachers. Nevertheless, the Board *is* clearly advancing a reformist agenda, in which high standards emphasize teaching excellence, including autonomy and reflectivity. Efforts are already underway in several states (e.g., California, Connecticut, Georgia) to bring assessment programs for licensure in line with the concept of certification underlying the National Board's work. Other states (e.g., Iowa, Michigan) are going on record as being in support of the Board and willing to recognize Board-certified teachers. The Board is also looking to professional organizations to provide the explicit clarifications of their broad standards in terms of how those are realized in specialty areas, such as English/Language Arts. We would anticipate that NCTE and IRA would soon play major roles in working with the Board in this area. Finally, if the Board is successful in its mission, increasing pressures will be placed on teacher education institutions to provide the kinds of experiences that will teach teachers not only the skills of teaching but how to reason and reflect about their teaching. Attestations of courses taken will not be sufficient to warrant a National Board certificate. Proof of professional excellence will be grounded in demonstrations of high-quality teaching—the way it should be.

The Promise of Quality Reading Instruction

Our examination of state, professional, and national efforts to establish teacher-certification standards reveals the shared goal of the reading education community: to insure reading instruction of the highest quality. To certify special teachers of reading (albeit in any subject area) one must demonstrate a minimum set of professional standards. While it may be argued that the relative quality of the standards varies widely from state to state, actions and nonactions by the IRA and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards clearly indicate that the power to control the decision-making process for teacher certification still remains within the state. State-level empowerment, at least in theory, brings the potential to influence change closer to home, as college and university teacher educators interpret state-mandated minimum standards in order to design and implement exemplary programs of study that prepare the best teachers possible. Indeed the politics seem correct, assuming that IRA's stated requirements really do "complement and enhance" and that the National Board's elaborate efforts really do create "voluntary assessment programs that complement."

Whether university teacher-education faculties choose to accept or reject the recommendations of professional and national-level leadership, the influence of these groups is apparent, as teacher educators struggle to deal with such issues as alternative certification programs, fewer courses in educational methodology, more field-based experiences and, finally, better ways to access what it means to be a "certified" professional teacher. We see our programs changing in response to mandates from the state departments, sometimes changing quickly, but most often ever so slowly, as is characteristic of educational change.

What, then, is the role of professional organizations, such as the American Reading Forum, in the complicated process of effecting positive change in reading education in general and reading certification in particular? Because we are an organization primarily made up of teacher educators, ARF provides a unique forum for analysis, debate, and reflection on issues discussed in this paper. Since we have a vested interest in the quality of reading instruction, our role as change makers might begin with a critical analysis of the concepts that drive certification in any discipline: professional standards of excellence and effective assessment of competencies. We could begin our analysis by posing some questions that might form the basis for future conference themes, problem courts, or paper sessions.

For instance. . . .

1. What are the competencies that we most wish to see in teachers who demonstrate excellence in the teaching of reading? How do we know that the IRA's list of recommendations are the best of all possible professional standards? How should standards be re-examined periodically and updated to reflect the best of all possible theory and research?

2. State-mandated competencies for certification in reading appear to vary widely, creating weaknesses in the system. Practically speaking, should standards be more uniform? If so, how could this be implemented effectively? Is there indeed any research that points to one state's reading certification standards being superior to another's?

3. National control over anything—be it medicine, health insurance, abortion, auto insurance, paternity leave, legislated phonics—is always the subject of great debate and, at least in the case of these examples, certain defeat. State interpretation and control prevails. Therefore, we may question the need for the existence of a "National Board of Professional Teaching Standards," in spite of its good intentions and worthwhile goals.

Many professions, including doctors and lawyers, look to their professional organizations for guidance in establishing and maintaining standards of excellence. Because the American Reading Forum is a professional organization made up of teacher educators, it is important for us to consider seriously the issues surrounding the standards to which we hold the teachers we are preparing. To be change makers within our own profession requires each of us to be both active researcher and reflective practitioner, a powerful and necessary duality.

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History of the American Reading Forum

Bob W. Jerrolds

Ruth Kurth, Chair of the Board of Directors, has asked me to produce a history of the American Reading Forum on the occasion of the association's tenth anniversary. She said that people do not want a dry-as-dust history; she asked me to make it funny; she asked me to cover the past ten years in ten pages or less—double spaced.

Now that's funny! Everything that is accurate in this report is the result of my own rigorous historical scholarship. Everything that is inaccurate or misleading is the result of stuff told to me by Nicki Askov, Chet Laine, or Marian Tonjes.

My comments reflect my own perception of the events leading to the founding and the early days of the organization. I have not consulted with those who would know of antecedent events and might have different interpretations of the events I witnessed. Certainly my comments do not have any official sanction of the Board or the General Assembly.

The genesis of an association such as the Forum can never be traced to a single person or event, emerging instead from multiple events and the exchanges of several persons. The American Reading Forum came into existence because a good many people in the various reading and other professional groups felt that their needs were not being met through any of then extant groups.

As our public and private elementary and secondary schools, colleges, and universities became more and more product-oriented and the "publish or perish" idea became a reality in even the smallest colleges, programs in our professional associations seemed to go in two directions:

1. give the classroom teacher and reading specialist concrete, practical suggestions for raising tests scores and meeting other realities of the public and private schools;

2. have as many presenters as possible to meet the vita needs of the association's members and keep the conference attendance as high as possible and membership roles as extensive as possible.

There was also abroad in the land concern for the political jockeying and egotripping that went on as some individuals sought to become officers in a professional association.

As those of us here came together in small informal groups to discuss our dissatisfaction with our home institutions and our associations, one theme seemed to emerge among the veterans of the field—we missed the more leisurely paced meetings where we could spend time with friends and colleagues from across the country and discuss and debate at length, in a congenial setting, the problems and issues of our field.

The young people we talked with expressed repeatedly their wish to present their research and their ideas about possible research in a forum that could be helpful and rigorous and provide criticism and suggestions without subjecting them to savage attacks. They wanted to be able to meet and talk with some of the leaders of the field without being cast in the role of sycophants.

All of us were concerned that colleges and universities that had once been, at least to some extent, cloistered environments where study, contemplation and scholarly dialogue were valued and encouraged had become rather noisy factories where administrators and tenure, promotion, and merit-pay committees counted products in terms of instructional hours generated, numbers of scholarly presentations made, and numbers of articles published.

What we seemed to want was a small organization, with opportunities for audience reaction and with a pace that allowed for thoughtful discussion and scholarly debate. We wanted a conference where friends and colleagues could assemble with some tranquility and young people in the field could meet and get to know those of stature in the field in an informal setting.

We had talked of our needs and wishes to some of the then-current officers of the various associations, particularly as programs exploded in size in 1977 and 1978. Our concerns fell on deaf ears.

In 1979, Jim Dinnan told me that he had examined the programs of the various reading organizations in recent years to find numerous instances where people would have six or seven minutes to present their research or other scholarly writing. With conferences lasting from two-and-a-half to four days and several hundred presenters scheduled, the possibilities for people to present were minimal at best and the possibilities for scholarly exchanges were virtually nil.

Jim asked me if I knew of any movement to start a new organization. I replied that I had been party to one such discussion. He asked if it had been a serious discussion. I replied that since Wayne Otto had been involved, it was not without its facetious side. As best I remember that event, during an early National Reading Conference three women and four men met for dinner at a well-known restaurant. Out of the group of five people, four were wearing navy or black clothes. Wayne commented that we looked more like an undertakers' convention than a group of honest people. From there it was downhill. Someone suggested that we should form a new reading association called the Undertakers of Reading. Then another wag, reminding us of the three reading groups of bluebirds, redbirds and buzzards, suggested that as the Undertakers of Reading we could have a logo depicting a buzzard. Wayne then suggested that the date and place for the annual convention would be predetermined since it would have to be on the 15th of March each year, when the buzzards come back to Hinckley, Ohio.

Jim allowed as how that was an unlikely foundation for a new association. He said he would call George and Evelyn Spache, Al and Betty Raygor, Emery Blismer, Betty Yarborough, Paul Berg and others who might be interested. I agreed to talk to Wayne Otto, Sylvia Carter (now Hutchinson), Gordon Gray and others. All these people talked with their friends and colleagues. To my surprise, but not to Jim's, virtually everyone we talked to thought a new organization was needed and contributed ideas and volunteered to contact others.

George and Evelyn Spache volunteered to do local arrangements for the first convention. Later they were joined by the Raygors, as hosts.

We agreed among ourselves that if we could get as many as 35 solid commitments to attend a conference in Sarasota, we would give it a shot. Jim sent out a one-page paper to those whose names he was given by various people, inviting them to submit proposals and join us in the formation of a new organization. The list of those contacted was relatively small, since we did not want another large organization.

The decision was made early on to do the thing with class and style. George and Evelyn made arrangements at the Colony Beach and Tennis

Resort, which was not the kind of place that most new groups would choose for their first convention. We all agreed we did not want to deal with an organization that would nickel and dime itself to death and limp financially from one year to the next. Whereas other organization began with mimeographed programs, a three- or four-dollar membership and eternal membership drives to stay afloat, we set the membership fee at $35.00, decided to have a refereed yearbook based on the first conference, and decided to have a classy looking printed program the first year out. It was also decided that any person in the groups was free to invite any promising person to join but that we would not do any wholesale recruiting drives.

Suggestions were made that we become a special-interest group of IRA, that we try to fill the gaps in the other associations, that we schedule our conference so as not to compete with other associations, etc. Finally, it was decided that we would meet our own needs as we saw them and not in any way define ourselves by what any other group might or might not be.

To have a conference when the time pressures from our jobs would be fewer, we wanted to move into the beginning of the Christmas break period, which was also the examination period for some schools. We knew that our exams could be proctored by others when we went to the conference. George and Evelyn Spache pointed out that we had to come early in December, to get convention rates in Florida, since the in-season rates would soar. That put us square on the dates of the National Reading Conference that first year. We talked it over, and most of us who were involved said that since we were taking on a new association, we were not going to NRC the next year anyway.

That led to accusations that we were attacking NRC. As far as I know, no official action was ever taken by NRC. But some individuals in that organization made threats—we would be blackballed in the field; they would use their influence to see that our scholarly work was rejected by reading journals, etc. Apparently telephone calls, and letters went out to the past and present leaders of NRC. The telephone and letter writers were apparently considerably chagrined to find that all but two or three of the living past presidents of NRC were among the charter members of the new organization. Then their tactics changed. We were offered places on the NRC program; we were offered blocks of rooms at the hotel, etc. We had no official or unofficial contacts with the College Reading Association. The International Reading Association contacted us about a possible co-sponsored program. We just said "no"; we wanted to go our way and made our plans for Sarasota.

Jim Dinnan agreed to do the program. All was moving swiftly and smoothly ahead until Jim was told by a federal judge that he had to tell how he voted on a promotion and tenure committee back at the University of Georgia. (The ballot had been secret, in accordance with the accepted procedure of the University of Georgia at the time.) Jim had this strange notion that the secret ballot was a pillar of American freedom and refused to tell how he voted.

The judge decided that a basic American right and a major factor in English Common Law was less important than his authority as a federal judge. He ordered Jim to reveal his vote or face contempt-of-court fines of $100 a day until he did reveal the vote. Jim refused and started paying $100 a day. Then Jim's friends started contributing $100 a day. A Methodist Women's Sunday School Class in Atlanta paid $100, and Jim is Jesuit by training and disposition. Former Secretary of State Dean Rusk paid $100. Some of you in this room paid $100. The case was on television and in the papers every day, and Jim was on his way to becoming a folk hero.

The judge decided that his strategy was not going to work. He told Jim that he would tell how he voted or go to prison. Jim went to prison, but he went dressed in full academic regalia, saying that it was the University of Georgia and college and university governance everywhere that were being imprisoned and held hostage.

But Jim was worried about the program for the new organization. Sylvia Hutchinson and I said, "Oh, that's all right, we'll take care of the program while you are gone. Go ahead; go to prison; have a good time."

We can joke now, but that was a horrible time for Jim, his family and his friends. Jim spent the summer in prison. The judge said that he would again order him to tell how he voted and send him back to prison until he did. Jim's family and friends knew something the judge did not know, that when Jim Dinnan said he would not be a party to the violation of a basic American freedom he would not be, and he wasn't. As the case dragged on, a member of Congress wrote an article in *Reader's Digest* about the arrogance of the federal judge in the Dinnan case. The *Wall street Journal* wrote editorials in favor of Dinnan; Jim appeared on a national television talk show and was invited to others. People wrote protests to the judge, the media, and to President Jimmy Carter. As time went on the judge and the plaintiff became the villains of the piece, but the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the first judge. Finally the University of Georgia bought out the case for a nominal fee. Meanwhile the plaintiff had become a lawyer.

The first meeting of the newly formed reading association was a startling success, even to those who initiated the organization. Some members of NRC protested our name, which at that time was the American Reading Conference, saying that people would confuse us with them. Since we did not want that to happen we decided to change our name. Several names were suggested. The idea of a forum held sway, but we could not get an agreement. Finally the name, American Reading Forum, was put forward, and some bulldog fan from Georgia yelled,"arf, arf, arf" and our fate was sealed. I hated the acronym and have tried for the past ten years to get people to use Forum as the association's short name, but you can see how well people listen to me.

To minimize any future politicking and egotripping that might revolve around the leadership of the new association, we decided not to have a president, vice president, and other such officers except as required by law for incorporation as a non-profit organization. All officers of and to the Board of Directors would be elected by the Board. Presiding at the general sessions of the conference would be a task divided among members of the Board.

Sylvia Carter (Hutchinson), Gordon Gray, Bob Jerrolds, Tony Manzo, Wayne Otto, Al Raygor, and George Spache were elected as the first Board of Directors; my ten pages are used up, and the rest is history.

A Commerative Poem on ARF's First Decade

Warren Askov, Nickie Askov, Chet Laine, and Ann Mallery

We are here to honor with pride and decorum
The 10th anniversary of our Reading Forum,
Held by tradition at Long Boat Key
Near the beach and the tennis at the Colony.
From all the groups that we could choose
ARF is the one most "entré nous."

To our first time colleagues, we welcome you here,
And we honor all those who've attended each year
We've enjoyed 10 years of ARF's tomfoolery,
The shrimp boils, raffles, and hand-made jewelry.

BARF Olympics are planned each year by Rick:
Which favor the clumsy as well as the quick
Gulls, herons, and even an occasional pelican
Watch every beach athlete compete as well as he can.

In our yearbook we find with each passing edition
That the buzz words change — like "metacognition."
With the use of that term the thought emerges
To reword the poem by Gellett Burgeses:

"I never met a meta thought
I hope I never think one."
But I'd rather think a purple thought
Than try to think a pink one

We are also urged to be "culturally literate"
(Though a few dissenters refuse to consider it.)
And just like whole grains have entered our diet,
We speak of "whole language" and are all urged to try it.

"Intergenerational literacy" we've also explored
Like Otto to Askov to Laine to Ford
As mentors bring students to present to us here,
And we get to know them over papers and beer.

Check-out time can cause great stress
When the tab that you get is a terrible mess,
And the guy at the desk finds computing too hard
When 10 other roommates have charged on your card.

But when it is over and you stand on the curb
Returning to campus seems all quite absurd.
Next year's proposal will be on your mind;
The research is pending and must be refined.

So come help ARF start its second decade.
Think of us at IRA, NRC, even NADE.
We hope each time that the fun won't end,
So come next year .... and bring a friend!"

American Reading Forum

Members of the Board of Directors

Joan B. Elliott, Chair (1990)
Indiana University at Pennsylvania

George McNinch (1990)
West Georgia College

James A. Dinnan (1990)
University of Georgia

Thomas A. Estes (1991)
University of Virginia

Sylvia M. Hutchinson (1991)
University of Georgia

Kay Camperell (1992)
Utah State University

Lawrence Erickson (1992)
Southern Illinois University

Past Members of the Board of Directors

Sylvia M. Carter (1983)
University of Georgia

Gordon Gray (1983)
Clemson University

Bob Jerrolds (1983)
North Georgia College

Alton Raygor (1983)
University of Minnesota

Anthony Manzo (1984)
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George Spache (1984)
Spache Educational Consultants Inc

Wayne Otto (1984)
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University of Georgia

Marion Tonjes (1985)
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Peggy E. Ransom (1987)
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Patricia Duncan (1988)
Virginia Commonwealth

Victoria J. Risko (1988)
Vanderbilt University

Marino C. Alvarez (1989)
Tennessee State University

Ruth Kurth (1989)
Concordia College

American Reading Forum

Membership Information

The American Reading Forum:

The American Reading Forum is a nonprofit, professional organization composed of individuals who share an interest in the improvement of reading. While the American Reading Forum is an organization that facilitates the dissemination of ideas and research, it places highest priority on providing its members opportunities for a critical discussion of ideas, issues, research, and paradigms.

The American Reading Forum's Goals:

The American Reading Forum declares the following to be its reason for existence and the guidelines for its activities:

- To provide a true forum for reading education where new research can be generated, research in progress can be refined, completed research can be reported, and reported research can be evaluated.
- To provide for the translation of reading research, theory, and philosophical deliberations into sound practice, but with no research, discussion, or contemplation to be discarded because its implementation is not immediately apparent.
- To conduct a conference at which newly trained scholars and scholars in training can get to know and get assistance from established and distinguished scholars in the field, through a mutual exchange of ideas.
- To provide a yearbook through which scholars of all levels can share viewpoints, resources, and expertise.
- To ensure that in the field of reading no idea is too bold or new to be given a hearing, and none too old to be given reconsideration.

The American Reading Forum's Meeting:

To achieve its goals, ARF sponsors a meeting each year during early December. The program consists of the common conference session formats (e.g., paper sessions, major addresses, and symposia), as well as alternative formats to those generally employed by organizations in the field of reading. To enhance the opportunity for participants' interaction, the America Reading Forum encourages a variety of formats for its sessions. A "Topical Issues Forum," a "Continuous Dialogue Session," and "Mentorships Sessions" are a few of the formats that ARF considers as ways to allow issues and topics to be discussed in depth by those who attend the annual meeting.

Membership Form

Annual membership in the American Reading Forum begins in December of the year in which your application is received. All memberships include the annual YEARBOOK, which is received the following December. Members also receive registration for the Annual Meeting in December.

Name: ____
First Initial Last

Address: ____

____

City/State or Province/Code: __________________________

Phone: Office (___) __________ Home (___) __________

Type of Membership: Individual ($35) ____ Student ($17.50) ____

Husband/Wife ($60) ____

Faculty Endorsement of Student Membership Application:
I verify that this applicant is a full-time student.

____________________ ____________________
Faculty Member's Signature Name of Institution

Mail this application with your check, made payable to ARF, to
AMERICAN READING FORUM
309 Aderhold Hall
University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602